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GUILLAS MACMANUS.

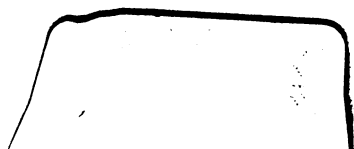
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The BEWITCHED  
FIDDLE  
and Other Stories.



**THE BEWITCHED FIDDLE**  
**AND OTHER STORIES**

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1841

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MacManus









**THE BEWITCHED FIDDLE**  
**AND OTHER STORIES**

**By the Same Author**



**IN CHIMNEY CORNERS,  
THROUGH THE TURF SMOKE,  
ETC.**

# THE BEWITCHED FIDDLE

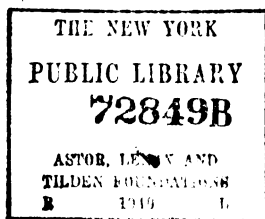
**And Other Irish Tales**

BY  
SEUMAS <sup>OF</sup> MAC MANUS  
I



NEW YORK  
DOUBLEDAY & McCLURE CO.

1900  
MKS



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To

*An Roisín Dubh*

---

Oh, many and many a comely knight,  
Whose glance was bold, and whose lance was bright,  
Rode into the South, where this Black Rose grew,  
But none ever came back with *Roisín Dubh*.



## APOLOGIA.

---

At the present moment when, with every muscle strained to snapping, the panting world is painfully intent on the hunt for happiness, I feel it is inopportune for a vagrant to set up his merry-go-round by the way, and with amazing impudence invite it to halt for an hour's frivolity.

The wonderful progress of science in our age, I am informed, has discovered to our thinking ones that it is desirable to close up the well of merriment in men's bosoms and seal it with a double seal. The lovers of their kind wander up and down the earth wailing, It is all barren! and, if the voice of a merrimaker hardened in his sins be lifted in any corner thereof, to troop instantly thitherward, with a View halloo! and run the interloper to earth.

However, in my Donegal, civilisation wins but slowly, and the curse of optimism



## Apologia

clings to our valleys with the pertinacity of the silver mists. With the proverbial perversity of our Irish nature, the well-spring of merriment (into which I have dipped a sorry pail, foolishly—you will say—imagining there may still be thirst in the outer world) gushes with us now as free and fresh as it did in darker days. He that considers even the shorn lamb has given the wayward Celtic soul the power of rising up, like Gulliver among the pigmies, and shaking to earth the little cares that would infest it.

SEUMAS MACMANUS.

DÚN-NA-NGALL, EIRE.

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# **THE BEWITCHED FIDDLE**



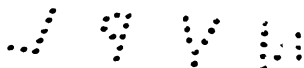
## THE BEWITCHED FIDDLE.

FALX, it 's a good long wheen of years since it happened now. It was ould Jimmy Higgerty, that was uncle to Mickey across there, reharsed the passage to me. An' it was ould Jimmy himself, more betoken, that was the cause of the whole affair—for Jimmy, ye know, was what we call a canny man, very knowin' intirely, an' up to all sorts of saicrets that you nor me nor one belongin' to us, thanks be to Providence, knows nothin' at all at all about. Jimmy was right-han' man with the fairies; an' if ye 'd believe all the stories ye hear goin' he come through some quare things, too, in his day—used to be out, they say, as reg'lar as the sun set, an' away ridin' aist an' waist with the good people, an' gettin' insight into their ways of workin'; an' sure it 's meself that rec'le'ts if there was only a bit of a year-oul' calve sick from one end of the barony to the

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

other, it was nothin' but post haste for Jimmy Higgerty to cure it—an', sure enough, when Jimmy put the charm on it, it either lived or died afther; there was no middle coorse.

Well, howsomiver, in Jimmy's day there was in Doorin a one Solomon Casshidy; an' the same Solomon in his young days was a thrifle wild—the fact is (to kill the hare at a blow), Solomon was the completest rascal ivir run on two feet, an' was a parable for the counthry. Christenin', weddin', wake, funeral, patthorn, fair, or market nivir wint off complete without Solomon Casshidy; dance, raffle, or spree of any sort, shape, or patthorn nivir missed Solomon Casshidy, who, by the way, was the very life an' sowl of the gatherin's; an' people would as soon think of doin' without the fiddler at one of these merry-makin's as without Solomon Casshidy. An' that just put me in mind that Solomon was the dandy hand at the fiddle; the bate of him was n't to be got between cock-crow an' candlelight the longest day in June. *He would charm the heart of a whin-bush;*



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

arrah, good luck to your wit, man, he 'd actially make the fiddle spake! They say it was as good as a sarcus to hear how he 'd handle it.

But poor Solomon, good luck to him, soon come to the end of his tether, an', afther takin' all the fun he could out of the worl', he, as himself said, turned over a new laif an' begun to look at the other side of the picther. An' I 'm thinkin' what-somiver he seen on the other side of it must have been deuced onpleasant, for the rollickin', singin', laughin', fiddlin', reckless, ne'er-do-well Solomon pulled a face on him the length of a tailyer's lapboard, an' if any of his ould comrades attimpted to make him convarsible on the fun that was goin' in any quarther of the counthry, Solomon would dhrop his jaws, an' fetch a groan would frighten a corp'; an', "My fren'," he would say, "this is all vanity, vanity! Life is hollow, an' these frivolities are only snares spread in our paths by the divil."

Anyhow, Solomon was an althered man, an' where he would go formerly to honour



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

the Sabbath by a rousin' game of *camán* with the good boys, he was now seen makin' his way to the meetin'-house with a Bible anondher his arm the size of a salt box, an' as many hime-books as would set up a hawker in a daicent way of thradin', an' he obsarvin' naither to the right nor to the left, but away a thousand miles ahead of him, as if he was always thryin' to make out the way to heaven somewhere in the skies foreninst him; an' where he would of another time be makin' his way across the counthry, maybe to the shouldher of Srual mountain for a spree, with the fiddle anondher his coat, ye might now meet him in the dusk of the evenin', still with the fiddle ondher the coat, but on a far betther errand—goin' to some prayer-meetin' at Inver, or Killymard, or Ballyweel, or the divil only knows where; he would n't go within an ass's roar of a raffle-house; an' if you tould him there was to be a dance or any other wee divarshin in sich and sich a place, he 'd strive to put the breadth of a townlan' betwixt him an' it, for he said the divil was chained to the back stone

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

of any house that there was a hornpipe played in.

Well, one evenin', it was in October, an' jist about night-fallin', Solomon was makin' his way for Billy Knox's of the head of the Glibe, where a great and very pious man, one Bartholomew Benjamin Rankin, was to hold a prayer-meetin' for the benefit of all the well-disposed sinners in that sthretch of counthry; an' throth, it seems to me that, onless the Glibe's changed mortially within the last jinnyration, there must have been a daicent quantity of sinners in them same parts. But, as I was sayin', Solomon was this evenin' on the good ar-rand, with his fiddle peepin' out from ondher his coat—for ye see, Solomon's ould practice whin he was a sinner come in handy now that he was a saint, an' no prayer-meetin' could be held without Solomon's fiddle to steady the voices, when they joined to sing the himes. She was a splendid piece of a fiddle, an' Solomon, when he turned over the new laif, was goin' out to brak her neck across the nixt ditch, when he remimbered how she might come

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

in handy this way, so he said to himself (as he tould afther) that "he 'd make the occasion of his sins a steppin'-stone to new vartues, an' cause her that was hairtofore jiggin' him down to the place below, now fiddle him into heaven."

He thought to himself this evenin' that he 'd jist light the pipè to keep him company as he jogged on, so where do ye think he 'd dhrop into, on purpose to light it, but ould Jimmy Higgerty's, the fairyman's, that I reharsed to ye about before. On layin' "Pagganinny," as he called the fiddle, down on a stool, whilst he was puttin' a screed of coal to the pipe, Jimmy Higgerty lifted her, an' dhrawin' the bow acrass her, he took a bar of a lively tune out of her, when Solomon jumped up as if he was sthruken.

"Higgerty, me good man," he says, "you have shocked me. Thim vain airs," siz he, "has been long unknown to that fiddle, an' I trusted that she would nivir more be an instrumint that the divil would gamble for sows on. Paice, paice, and dhraw not the bow in idle vanity again!"

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

"Arrah, good-morra to ye," siz Jimmy, that way back to him, "but it 's delicate yer narves must have got intirely, lately. Throth, Misther Casshidy, I seen the time this would n't frightened ye one bit"; an' all at oncet he sthruck up, "Go to the divil an' shake yerself," while poor Solomon stood thrimblin' in the middle of the flure like a man with the aguey. Whin Jimmy finished up with a flourish that would have delighted Solomon the days he was at himself (for, be the same token, Solomon was no miss at handlin' the bow naither), he cut some quare figures with his left han' three times over the fiddle, an' handin' it to Solomon, he says, "May ye nivir have more raison to be frightened than by a jig from the same fiddle—*that 's all I say!*"

Poor Solomon did n't know the hidden mainin' of them words, or it would have made him look crooked; nor he did n't know naither that Jimmy had put *pish-erogues* on the fiddle; but all the same he took it from him with a glum look enough, and afther praichin' an edifyin' sarmon on frivolities, an' death an' jedgment, to

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

Jimmy Higgerty, he betook him on the road again.

There was a wondherful congregation of the sinners an' saints of the Glibe—but the sinners had the best of it anyhow, in regards to numbers—in Bill Knox's that night. An' Bartholomew Benjamin Rankin was there, an' it was as good as a sarmin in itself just to get one glance at his face. There was as much holiness an' piety in it, ye 'd a'most think, as would save the sowsls of a whole barony. Solomon, who now got all sorts an' sizes of respect, as bein' a reformed sinner, an' was looked up to with ten times as much honour and rivirence as was paid to them that was saints all their life, got a sait, as was usual, beside the praicher. An' it's himself that was proud, an' he 'd look down on the common crowd below with a most pityin' look on his face. An' the well-disposed ones in the congregation would look up at Solomon, an' then give a groan that ye might hear at Srual; an' Solomon would look down on the sinners an' give another groan that ye might

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

hear him at Barnesmore; an' then both Solomon an' the sinners would look up at the raffthers, an' give a groan that ye might hear at Muckish. Afther some time, when they had got faistin' their sows fairly well on Solomon, a hime was called out, a very solemn one. "An'," says the praicher, lookin' at Solomon, "our saintly brother here, of whom aich and ivery heart in this gatherin' feels proud, an' whose pious ways are the glorification, admiration, an' edification of every true Christian since he gave up his ungodly life, an' turned onto the path of righteousness—brother Solomon will give us the keynote, an' lend us the aid of his unmusical box, throughout."

Brother Solomon, be me socks, dhrew a face on him the length of his own fiddle, as if he was thinkin' of his own unworthiness, poor man, an' says:

"It affords me a pious pleasure to dhraw my bow on dher the circumstances—that bow which so often snared me into the devil's sarvice; but I thank God with my heart that I have long since departed from

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

my wicked, wicked, unspeakably vile an' sinful ways; an' this han' has long since forgotten them vain and ungodly airs that at one time occupied every spare moment of my then onchristian life—long since, I say, have I buried deep in oblivion every remembrance of thim wicked tunes, an' the cunnin' of my han' is now only used for a far loftier an' bettther purpose. Bretherin, I shall begin."

And Solomon dhraws the bow across the fiddle, an' of all the himes tunes which was prented what do ye think does he sthrike up? "Go to the divil an' shake yerself!" Och, it 's as thrue as I 'm tellin' it to ye. But, *ochón*, if there was n't consternation in that house, I 'm a gintleman! Solomon himself stopped suddent, for all the world lookin' like a stuck pig; an' he looked at the praicher, an' the praicher looked at him, and the congregation looked at both of them, and then Solomon prayed from his heart as he nivir prayed afore, that the Lord in His marey might make the flure open and swallow him. The flure, though, as I suppose

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

ye have guessed, did not open, but Bartholomew Benjamin's mouth did, an' he sayed, siz he:

"Bretherin! bretherin! this is a sad fallin' away! Alas! alas! Who should have thought that Brother Solomon, the deformed sinner, would have returned to his ould godless coorses! The rulin' passion, my dear bretherin, is so sthrong in him—waxin' sthrong with new sthrength—that he has onvoluntarily bethrayed the divil that has again got hould on him. Bretherin, let us pray for him!"

An' in a jiffey the thundersthruick congregation were on their knees prayin' like Trojans for the delivery of poor Solomon from the divil. Solomon, of course, for ap-pairance' sake, had to take to his knees, too, but between you an' me, it's meself's afeard that all the prayers he said would not fetch him very far on the way to the first mile-stone that leads to heaven. I'll wager whoivir heerd him, that his prayers were sweet ones, that the divil might saize ould Jimmy Higgerty an' carry him off body an' bones, an' give him a toastin' on a spe-



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

cial griddle down below. When they thought they had prayed long enough, an' that the divil was gone out of Solomon, they got up to their feet again, and they turned up the whites of their eyes till Bartholomew Binjamin announced that they would oncest more put Brother Solomon's faith to the test, to see if he had profited by the few minutes' sperritual recreation that they had indulged in. Solomon lifted the bow, an' afore he started he turned up the whites of his eyes in the usual fashion, as if he was lookin' for guidance, but in his heart he was only callin' down another black curse on Jimmy Higerty.

"Bretherin!" siz he, as solemn as a judge,— "Bretherin! The temper" (by which he meant the divil of coorse) "possessed the fiddle, and not my humble self; in witness whereof just attind to the solemn an' addyfyin' air I will now produce for ye." An' down comes the bow on the fiddle, an' up starts that beautiful jig tune, "The Siege of Carrick"!

Och, tarnation to me waistcoat, but there

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

was sich a scene in two minnits as would charm a dancin' mather! When Solomon played the first bar of it, he could as soon comb his head with his toes as he could stop it. But that was n't the best of it. Bartholomew Benjamin, instead of goin' into a cowl dead faint, as one would expect, begun to shuffle his feet in a suspicious way, an' afore ye'd say "thrapsticks" he was weltin' the flure like the broth of a boy, tearin' away at the jig like the ould Nick! An' in the squintin' of yer eye there was n't a sowl anondher the roof, man, woman, or child, saint or sinner, that was n't whackin' away at it like the forties, iviry man of them leatherin' the flure like a thrasher, jumpin' up till their heads would a'most sthrike the rafters, an' yellin' like red Injins, whilst me brave Solomon played like a black, put new life into the fiddle at ivery squeak, an' gave the jiggers whativer wee encouragement that he could spare time from the fiddle for——

"Come, boys, yez have n't fair play to foot it properly here. Yez is the finest set

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

at a jig that I have faisted me eyes on since I give up me ungodly ways, an' it would be a pity for not to give yez ivery privilege—it 's a fine clear moonlight, an' we 'll go outside where we 'll have room an' fair play at it. Come along, me mirry, mirry lads!" An' Solomon fiddled away out of the dure, an' the whole congregation leapt an' flung an' jigged it out in all possible an' onpossible shapes afther him. Och, they say it was a sight for sore eyes to see the capers that the party cut; iviry man jack of them tryin' to see who could be crazier than his naybour; an' out they got that way on the road, like a lunatic asylum turned loose for a holiday; an' Solomon headed down the road in the direction of Donegal, while the whole counthryside turned out when they heerd the yellin' an' fiddlin' an' prancin', an' seein' Solomon headin' them with the fiddle, an' Bartholomew Benjamin fillin' the front rank in company with his two feet, an' he jiggin' it away at the rate of a christenin'! The people were first inclined to laugh, but be the powdhers the nixt thing they done was

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

join in themselves, an' foot it away afther the fiddle ninety-nine times crazier than the congregation. An' hot foot they kept it goin', up hill an' down dale, over height an' hollow, with fresh batches joinin' in at ivery lane an' turn, an' Solomon, the boy, layin' into the fiddle at a rate as if he was gettin' a salary for it; an', be the boots, by the time they raiched the foot of the road, you nivir seen in all your born days a harvest fair or a Repale meetin' as big as it was!

Here Solomon turned to the left, with the purcession still jiggin' it afther him, an' he nixt got onto the lane that leads up to the Killymard ould graveyard, an' over the stile, in among the graves with the mirry company brakin' their necks over, afther him; an' when they got in here, Solomon made thracks for a nate dandy bit of a tombstone in the centhre of the yard, an' upon it he h'isted himself, with Bartholomew Benjamin up beside him, whilst the remainder of the party reshumed their attitudes all roun' about, an' they fightin' like wild cats to see who

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

would get pursession of the tombstones, for they saw they were as good as barn-doors for dancin' on. An' throgs, there might be purty good dancers there, but divil resave the one of them that Solomon and Batholomew Benjamin could n't take the shine out of. They had a bran' new tombstone, the pick an' choice of all in the yard, an' if they did n't do it in royal style, an' cut a copy to the crowd, call me a cuckoo!

But what would ye have of it, but the nixt man lands on the scene was Sandy Montgomery, the Recthor. He was passin' the road, an' seein' the fun in the graveyard, he come up in a t'undherin' passion to horsewhip iviry mother's sowl of them. But, sweet good luck to ye, if he did n't jump up on the fiddler's tombstone, an' catchin' Bartholomew Benjamin by the han', foot it away, likewise.

An' it would have gone on to daylight in the mornin', if ould Jimmy Higgerty, the rascal, who followed the fun the whole way from the Glibe, for the purpose of tastifyin' to it—if he had n't come behin'

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

Solomon an' tould him to kick up his right heel, dhraw his left thumb three times over the sthrings of the fiddle, an' look over his left shouldher at the moon, an' then see what music he 'd take out of it. No sooner sayed nor done; an' all at once the tune changed to a hime tune, all mournful, an' iviry heel in the graveyard was paralysed. Ivery sowl of them looked at one another like they wor wakenin' out of a dhraim.

Solomon himself dhrew up, an' he gave a bewildhered look all roun' him, an' then looked at Sandy Montgomery, who was standin' forenenst him on the stone, an' he as pale as a sheet. Ivery man of the three on the tombstone gave themselves up as lost men, ruinated intirely, out an' out, afther makin' such spectacles of themselves for the counthry. The Recthor lost conthrol of himself completely, an' puttin' his fist anondher Solomon's nose, he says:

"Ye common scoundhril, ye; ye 've made me disgrace my cloth, ye cutthroat villain——"

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

But afore he could get out another word, Solomon, who had some of the spunk of his early days in him still, and was a thrifle hasty, besides that his dandher was riz in regards to the purty pickle he was in—Solomon ups with the fiddle, an' dhravin' it roun' his head with a swing, he takes the Recthor across the noddle an' knocked him a'most into kingdom come, away off the tombstone. But, my hearty, in swingin' the fiddle, does n't he catch Bartholomew Benjamin, who was standin' behind him, a nate little bit of a knock on the skull. So, now turnin' round to apologise to him, Bartholomew Benjamin ups with his fist an' plants it undher Solomon's nose, too, for he was just commencin' a norration.

“Ye mane, onprincipled, ungodly bla'-guard!”

But Solomon could n't stand this neither. He says to himself he might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb, and that when he knocked down a Recthor, he might with an aisier conscience knock down a praicher. So he took the praicher a wallop with the

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

fiddle that left him sprawlin' in the Rec-thor's lap with his 'heels uppermost, and Solomon leapt from the tombstone, an' off through the crowd for the bare life, wal-lopin' them right an' left. They all slunk home afther a while with their tails between their legs, but poor Solomon was the worst of all. He made "Pagganinny" into smithereens—what remained of her. An' he did n't lift his head for twelve months afther.





**THE WISDOM OF DARK  
PATHRICK**



## THE WISDOM OF DARK PATHERICK.

THERE was wanst upon a time, as the oul' stories goes,—it might 'a' been five hundhred years ago, or it might 'a' been ten hundhred years ago, or it might 'a' been double that; meself does n't rightly know any more nor that it was a *laghie* wheen iv years ago, anyhow,—an' the Lord Mayor himself of Dublin had a great fallin' out with the lan'lord of the Head Inns there. The Lord Mayor an' this same lan'lord had been great oul' cronies entirely up till the time they fell out. As thick as thieves they had always, up till this, been. They wor like a pair of magpies in good weather—ye could n't see wan of them without findin' the other close by. But behold ye! as I sayed, somethin' or other comed atween them an' sundhered them, an' they had a great fallin' out altogether, an' a bitther wan. An' whatsom-iver it was that sundhered them, it was n't

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

the Lord Mayor's fault, anyhow; beca'se a good-natureder man er a better-hearted niver breathed than him. The lan'lord of the Head Inns, though, was a cantank'rus nadger, an' it was the wondher iv the wurrl' why iver the poor Lord Mayor tuk till him, or how iver he stuck till him; a cantank'rus, crabbéd oul' cadger he was, that could n't agree with nobody, or nobody could n't agree with him, for he was iver an' always sthrivin' to get the inside an' the upper han' of ivery wan iver he fell in with. But the Lord Mayor, bein' a simple, kindly hearted craiture, as I sayed afore, somehow managed to pull along with the oul' nadger till this thing (whatsomiver it was) turned up an' parted them, with bitterness ranklin' in the black heart of the lan'lord.

The designin' oul' buck immediately laid himself out to plan how he 'd vent his spleen an' revenge himself on the Lord Mayor. An' he soon thought he foun' a gran' way—for the devil was surely helpin' him. The Lord Mayor, it seems, was in the habit, on his way home till his own

## The Wisdom of Dark Pathrick.

dinner, of dhroppin' in to see the lan'lord of the Head Inns; an' it usually happened that the lan'lord would just at that very time be shooperintendin' the spreadin' of the dinner for his lodgers, an' the Lord Mayor would, of course, step into the parlor where the dinner was bein' laid out, an' have a chat with the lan'lord, an' a pleasant sniff of the dinner, moreover—which always did him a mighty share of good, for the Head Inns's dinners was iver the very best (there 's no denyin' it), an' smelt mortal fine. Very well. The lan'lord of the Head Inns, runnin' over iverything in his mind, took stock of this, an' "Me buck," says he till himself, an' referin' to the Lord Mayor—"me buck," says he, "I have ye there. If I have n't I'll let me panthry-boy twist me nose for me."

With small loss of time, he spit on his stick, an' thrudged off to the foremost liwyer in the city, tuk his advice on the matther, an', that bein' favourable, there an' then at wanst enthered a great law-shoot again' the Lord Mayor of Dublin to recover a large debt off the Lord Mayor,

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the cost of smellin' his dinner every day for the past ten years—which would come till a mighty great sum when it would be all added up, an' would sartintly ruinate the poor Lord Mayor out an' out, if the lan'lord won his case, an' laive him a beggar on the sthreets of Dublin. An' then the scoundhril went an' employed all of the foremost liwyers in Irelan' to fight his case; an' all of them sayed he had a mortial good case, an' was sartint to win it. The poor Lord Mayor, seein' beggary starin' him in the face, did n't employ a liwyer at all, at all, only wan; beca'se he could n't afford more if he was goin' to be called on to pay all the big damages that the case would come to.

Well, there was a tarrible great furore all over Dublin when they heerd of the case the lan'lord of the Head Inns had again' the Lord Mayor, an' nothing else was talked of from end to wynd of the city; an' all Dublin was at wanst divided intil parties, wan party sayin' that the Lord Mayor 'u'd surely win the case, an' the other party swearin' that the lan'lord of

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the Head Inns had all the laws of the lan' on his side, an' would sartintly be given heavy damages again' the Lord Mayor. An' among the liwyers an' judges even, there was a hot time; they divided intil two camps, an' banged law an' law-books an' no end of abuse at others' heads over it.

The day of the thrial it was looked forrid to by all hands with the greatest excitement. An' when the day come, the people was packed in the coort-house lake herrin's in a hogshead; an' outside the coort-house an' for as good as a quarther of a mile around it on all sides, the crowds swarmed an' pushed an' crushed, an' swore an' fought, an' did all sorts of outrageous things that an excited crowd 'ill do. There was twelve judges picked out of all Irelan' sat on the bench to thry the case, an' wan head judge over them all—the very greatest liwyer an' brilliantest judge in the lan'. There niver was such a case in Irelan' afore, an' there has n't been anything like such a case since. The thrial it begun afther br'akfast-time on a Monday, on a long June day, an' it was be



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candlelight, on the third evenin' afther, that the last witness finished givin' his evidence, for they had no end of cooks, an' great connoshoors (they called them), an' famous aitters an' dhrinkers, an' celebrated liwyers, all givin' their evidence an' their opinions on the matther; an' afther that the lan'lord's counsel an' the Lord Mayor's counsel got aich a whole leelong day till himself to wind up an' explain the pros an' cons of the case, an' make it a deuced sight complicateder than ever it had been, for the help an' guidance of the thirteen lads that slept in relays on the bench. An' then, afther that, it tuk them thirteen lads another leelong day to considher an' weigh the evidence, an' make their minds as to the rights an' the wrongs of the case—which brought the thrial on to Sathurday night; an' there was many 's an' many 's the wan there that for the whole six days niver riz off their saits or left the coort-house, but had their victuals passed in to them over the heads of the crowd.

Late on Sathurday night, then, the decision was given. The thirteen judges

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come out of their room in a sthring, an' tuk their saits wan be wan on the bench, with the head judge in the centhre. An' when they had their saits taken, the head judge got up an', afther a long paramble, announced their decision, which was that six of the judges was for givin' the lan'lord of the Head Inns damages, an' six more was dead again' it, an' he himself could n't rightly see his way which side was in the right, an' which side he should give his vardiet for!

So there they wor, afther all their throuble, an' all their bother, an' all their hubbub—there wor the lan'lord an' the Lord Mayor, an' the liwyers an' judges, an' all Dublin, thrown back where they started, an' left to go for wan another over the case again!

Well, they had nothin' for it, only back from the beginnin' an' thry the whole case over again, an' that they did. But behold ye! when the judges come out on the bench to give their decision this time, there was two of them had their thumbs in a sling, an' wan of them come on a crutch,

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an' the remaindher had either black eyes or broken noses, or there was some of their faytures missin' altogether—an' their vardict was n't a particle more satisfactory than before.

An' afther a third thrial there was n't a sowl of the third to show up on the bench, barrin' the head judge himself; an' three docthors in the coort had to go intil the room to set his ribs afore he was able to be carried out to give the same oul' vardict.

Afther that a bad time begun in Dublin, an' no day passed that there was n't bloodshed on the public sthreets, an', still worse, in the very bosom of private families that, up till this misfortunate case, was known an' respected as morals [models] of family affection for all the province of Leinsther. It was a bad state of affairs, sure enough; it was goin' daily from bad to worse, an' there was no tellin' where it was goin' to stop, if something was n't done soon an' suddint to end it all.

Then there was a counclitation called of all the judges, an' all the gover'ment officials, an' all the greatest men of Irelan', to

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see if they could n't arrive at some decision on this wondherful case; but the bloodshed that flowed from that council-tation-room far surpassed anything that had gone afore, an' the council-tation bruck up in disorder, an' aich man was carried home on his own doore.

An' when the king seen this, an' seen that the counthry was fast fallin' intil a dhreadful civil war,—for be this time the contention had spread, an' sides wor taken in the dispute all over the len'th an' brea'th of Irelan',—when the king, I say, seen this, he called a council-tation of all of his own ministhers, an' statesmen, an' advisers, to considher what was best to be done; an' the result of this was that a proclamation was give out, makin' it known to all whom it might consarn that if there was any wan man betwixt the four says of Irelan' who could come forrid an' give a proper vardict in this great case, he 'd be loaded with wealth an' honours, an' his name writ down in the hith'ry-books of Irelan' for all ginnirations to read.

Well, as ye may feel sartin, this procla-

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mation was n't out four-an'-twenty hours till the roads leadin' till Dublin was swarmin' with iv'ry little tuppence-ha'-penny wiseacre that was used to layin' down the law on his own du'ghill-steddin', an' aich of who thought himself the wisest man in Irelan'. The king an' his counselors had a purty busy time of it listenin' to the schaims aich of these philosophers had to offer for the settlement of the case—an' ivery single schaim was sillier an' more nonsensical than the other. An' when the king an' his counsellors had got through with them all, they foun' they had been only throttin' round a bush all the time, an' were at the same place still; only Irelan' was now in a hundhred times a disturbeder state, for ivery man whose vardict was refused be the king went back home an' riz a followin' an' a faction that swore to him an' his docthrine, an' vowed vingeance on all who believed in any other body's.

Now, throughout all this there was livin' an' workin' away quietly at his little patch of groun' in Donegal a little black-headed,

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black-whiskered man who the neighbours called Dark Pathrick, an' who was known for his rough wisdom an' cuteness all over his own barony. If there iver come up any mighty hard point, it went as a sayin' among the people, "Why, that would puzzle Dark Pathrick himself!" An' the question would puzzle Dark Pathrick was given up by the cliverest heads in the barony as a hopeless case entirely. As I sayed, Dark Pathrick had been quietly workin' his little patch of groun' during all the time Irelan' was in a roolye-boolye over this great case—an' he sayed nothin'. But when all resorts had been thried an' failed to discover a proper vardict in the case, an' Irelan' was left in a worse state than when they begun, Dark Pathrick pitched the spade out of his fist wan day, an' went intil the house, an' washed an' shaved himself, an' threw on his best little duds of clothes. Then he tied up in a red handkerchief a few articles, an' a cake of well-buttered oat-bread, an' puttin' it on the end of his oak staff over his shouldher, tuk the broad road. The neighbours,

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when they seen him, come rushin' out, an' sayed, "Prosper the journey, Pathrick; but where are ye goin'?" "To Dublin city, good neighbours," Pathrick made answer, in his usual kindly way. "To Dublin city!" says they, in surprise "An' for to do what, Pathrick *a thaisge*?" "For to give a vardict in this tarrible case," says Pathrick. "Och, wishna, wishna, Pathrick," says they, "do n't be foolish, poor man! You 're both wise an' cliver here among the neighbours, an' we know ye an' think a dale of ye—there 's none we think more of; but if ye go up to Dublin among the l'arned an' well-dhressed an' polite gintlemen ye 'll be meetin' there, why Pathrick asthore, they 'll make ye a laughin'-stock. An' if them l'arned heads besides, was n't able to come till a vardict, do n't ye know in yer heart an' sowl, poor Pathrick, that you 'll niver be able to do it?" They maint the very best be Pathrick, beca'se they had great regards for him; but Pathrick only smiled an' sayed: "Well, I often promised meself that I 'd see Dublin afore I 'd die; so if the worst

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comes to the worst, me journey 'ill not be for nothin', anyhow. Good-by," says he, "an' God's blessin' remain with yez till I get back." "Good-by, Pathrick," says they, "good-by; an' God sen' ye safe—an' sen' ye back to us, too, a wiser man." An' Pathrick, with his stick an' little bundle, was gone.

Dark Pathrick had an adventurous journey, but he reached Dublin at length; an' when he come there, he axed the first man he met to direct him to the king's castle. "For why do you want the king's castle?" says the man, says he, lookin' at poor Pathrick, an' his stick an' little bundle, an' his ill-fittin' counthry clothes. "For why," says he, "do you want the king's castle?" "Beca'se," says Dark Pathrick, "I want to give the vardict in this great lawshoot." When the man heerd this he laughed that hearty that a crowd gathered; an' when he toul' the crowd the arrand Pathrick was on, the crowd looked at Pathrick an' laughed. Poor Pathrick was n't used to bein' laughed at; he did n't know the ways of Dublin jackeens, an' this



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thraitment cut him to the heart. But he was too spunky to let these fools see it. He just dismounted the bundle off the end of the stick, an' as soon as the crowd seen the sort of a grip he got of the stick, they very wisely fell back to the wan side an' the other an' let Pathrick pass. But they follied him along Dublin sthreet, an' wan of them got up on a pole a big printed card to say :

THIS IS DARK PATHRICK FROM DONEGAL,  
COME UP TO GIVE THE VARDIOT IN THE  
GREAT LAWSHOOT!

An' as they went along the crowd swelled an' swelled, till when they come to the king's gates there was an immense gatherin' around him entirely. An' when Dark Pathrick tould the sodjers who he was an' the arrand he had come upon, they joined the crowd in laughin' their hearty skinful; an' when Dark Pathrick, flashin' scorn at all of them, thried to push past them to get intil the castle, they put the point of their swords to his stomach an' made him back an' back till he near a'most bruck his backbone with the bendin' backwards;

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an' at that both the sodjers an' the crowd laughed twicet louder than afore.

But the laughin' brought the king himself to the window, an' he put out his head to inquire what was the matther. The sodjers an' the crowd pointed out to him Dark Pathrick, an' sayed that this was a man who had come from Donegal to give the vardict in the great lawshoot, an' then they laughed again. "For what are yez laughin'?" says the king. "Or is that the proper way to thrate sthrangers when they come intil yer town?" Then he gazed over Dark Pathrick, who was lookin' all the scorn was in him at the miserable wretches that seen fit to jeer him. "Do yez think," says the king then, to them again, "that beca'se a man comes from Donegal he knows nothing, or that beca'se he 's poorly dhressed he 's to be jeered at? I see this poor man, an' I see yous—an' I see, too, that there 's some purty consaity men among yez; an' this I 'm goin' to say for yer edification: that I would n't swap this poor ill-dhressed man from Donegal for any twenty of the men that thinks most

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about themselves in the crowd. Just," says the king, "put that in yer pipes an' shmoke it. Clear off with yez now, or be the piper that played afore Moses I 'll call out me regimint of throopers an' run yez down, ye unmannerly, undher-bred lot of scullions an' pot-wallopers, ye!" says the king. "Small wondher," says he, "Dublin has got such a bad name! An' if I iver again, as long as I live an' reign, hear tell of the lakes of such happenin', I 'll hang ivery tenth man of ye afore his own doore, for an example an' a warnin' to the other nine. As for yous," says he then to the sodjers, "considher yerselves undher arrest till I have time to attend to yez further. You, Dark Pathrick," says he, "as I undherstand that 's yer name, step within the castle. I 'll ordher ye a repast, an' afther ye 've aiten an' rested I shall be plaised to enthertain any proposition ye 've got to make to me regardin' this tarrible lawshoot."

An' afther he had rested an' aiten, Dark Pathrick was taken into the parlour to the king, an' saited upon a chair of baiten

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gould. An' not wan whit daunted he was, no more nor if he had been sittin' on a sthraw siostog on wan side of his own hearth, addhressin' his next-door neighbour sittin' upon the other side. For Dark Pathrick set small store by king or coortier, onless they had brighter wits or bigger hearts than other men, an' then he knew how to respect them accordingly.

Dark Pathrick give the king an insight intil who an' what he was, an' toul' him that he 'd like to have a thry at givin' a vardict in this lawshoot.

"Me good man," says the king, "an' so ye will—an' why should n't ye! If ye fail atself (for I 've come," says he, with a sigh, "to expect nothin' but failure now)—if ye fail atself, ye 'll make a brighter failure than many 's the consaiteder man thried his han' an' his head at the same case within the last six months."

"I thank ye," says Dark Pathrick, with his best curtshy. "An' I 'd like to have the case thried afore me as soon as is conveynient for all consarned."

All consarned were notified. An' very

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soon the rumour of it spread that a man be the name of Dark Pathrick from Donegal, who give himself out as mighty knowledgeable entirely, was goin' to thry the great lawshoot, an' thry to come to a vardict on it. So on the day of the thrial the coort-house was, this time, packed ten times thicker than it iver had been afore—an' this time, too, all the judges an' lawyers an' lawmakers in Irelan' that could either creep, crawl, or walk to it was there, occupyin' their saits hours afore the thrial begun at all; for they wor all on their edge to know what new vardict this sthrange, ignorant, poor man from Donegal could think of, afther all the best an' brightest brains of the counthry havin' thried to give a vardict in vain. Dark Pathrick he come in an' tuk his sait on the bench. All eyes was turned upon him, to read him an' size him up; an' all of them was astonished to see this poor, ignorant (as they thought), an' ill-dhressed man from Donegal sittin' down upon the judges' bench as cool as if it was upon a siostog among neighbours in his own chimley-

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corner in Donegal; not the laist taste of narvousness did he show as he looked calmly over all that congregation of great an' famous judges an' counsellors, an' nobility of all ranks, an' all the high-up gen-thry an' fashionable ladies of Dublin an' the five provinces. "He 's too ignorant," says some of them, "to know the great company he 's among." An' these people in their own hearts give Dark Pathrick a fool's pardon.

Well, to make a long story short (as tale-tellers put it), the thrial it begun, an' went on an' on—Dark Pathrick sittin' with his eyes half closed all the time, listenin' to all, but sayin' nothin', an' axin' no questions. "Faith, a dhroll judge, him!" says the people.

But when all the witnesses an' all the experts upon both sides had been heerd, an' the counsellors upon both sides had spoke themselves emp'y, an' wound up the case, there got up a great silence in the coort: every mother's sowl held his breath to hear what the vardict of Dark Pathrick was goin' to be. Dark Pathrick slowly

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opened his eyes, an' gathered himself together on the bench, like a man would be comin' out of dhraims.

"Call the lan'lord of the Head Inns again," says Dark Pathrick to the coort crier.

An' the coort crier did as he was bid. An' the lan'lord of the Head Inns stepped up intill the witness-box wanst more.

"For the smell of how many dinners, tell me again," says Pathrick, "do you claim compinsation, lan'lord?"

"A dinner a day for ten years," says the lan'lord of the Head Inns. "Yer clerk of coort 'ill make up," says he, "how many that comes till."

"Thirty-six hundhred an' fifty," says Dark Pathrick, at his aise, to the surprise of all, without waitin' for the clerk of coort, who had just begun sharpenin' his pencil for the purpose of figurin' it up.

"Thirty-six hundhred an' fifty," says Pathrick. "An' now tell me, me good man, by vartue of yer oath, how much you calculate each dinner to have been worth?"

"The smell of the dinner, does yer honor

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mean?" says the lan'lord; for he calculated he 'd lose nothin' by bein' a bit polite to Dark Pathrick.

"The dinners—the dinners themselves," says Pathrick. "I 'll look afther the smell."

"Well, my dinners was always noted as bein' the very best an' highest-classed dinners in all Dublin—nothin' used but the best of materials, an' first-class cooks," says the lan'lord of the Head Inns. "An', believe me, I 'm puttin' it at the modher-atest figure I can afford, when I say that each dinner was grand valuey for two shillin's. The clerk of the coort is a remarkable good figurer, an' I b'lieve he 'll be able to figure up what a dinner a day at two shillin's should come till in ten years."

"Three hundred an' sixty-five poun's, naught, an' nopence," says Dark Pathrick, spaikin' lake a riddy-rackoner, to the dumfoundhered surprise of ivery sowl in the coort. "I thank both you an' the clerk of the coort," says he.

"An' now," says Pathrick, "did you hear the dafindant in this case swear that



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at laist a quarther of yer dinners smelled positively bad, an' were a delusion an' a snare? Remimber ye 're on yer oath."

"I heerd that," says the lan'lord; "an' for the sake of makin' yer road to a vardict smooth, I 'll consent to give in that sixty-five pounds' worth of the dinners maybe did n't smell genuine, be raison of mistakes in the cooks' parts."

"Why," says all the liwyers an' judges in the coort,—“why,” says they among themselves, “this Dark Pathrick is gettin' the case more in-*thrick*-at than iver it was, an' deeper in the mire.”

“Now,” says Dark Pathrick, “you lan'-lord can remove to the wan side, an' I want the dafindant in this case to step up beside ye.”

So up the Lord Mayor steps into the witness-box beside the lan'lord, both of them glarin' at other like caged wil'cats.

“Lord Mayor,” says Pathrick, “I want you—or yer frien's for ye—to produce three hundhred good goold sovereigns an' sixty-five countherfeit wans.”

The Lord Mayor he got purple in the

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face with rage. "I refuse," says he, stampin' his foot—"I refuse the vardict!"

"Sure, we knew how it would be," says the judges an' counsellors in the coort among themselves.

An' instantly a mighty hubbub got up through the whole coort: the people shouted out that was the worst an' unjustest vardict iver yet was given, an' they 'd not have it; an' looked wondherful like that blood was about to flow again, when the king—for of course he had a sait in coort throughout the whole thrial—got up an' sayed, says he:

"If I rightly undherstand, the vardict is n't yet given?"

Says Dark Pathrick, "Yer Highness does rightly undherstand."

"Then," says the king, "do as ye 're bid, Lord Mayor."

The people consented to settle down a bit tell they 'd find what was the upshot of this move goin' to be. An' the Lord Mayor an' his friends went away, an' brought back with them a little box out of which they counted down upon the bench.

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to the satisfaction of the king an' the people an' lan'lord, an' all, three hundhred shinin' good goold sovereigns; an' a bag out of which they counted out sixty-five countherfeit sovereigns made of gilded copper.

"Put them good sovereigns intill the box again, an' close it," says Pathrick; "an' put the bad wans intill the bag again, an' tie it loosely, givin' them plenty of room to rowl about."

The whole coort now stood on its tippy-toes, in the greatest state of puzzle an' threpidation.

"Lan'lord," says Dark Pathrick, "be good enough to state, for all our informations, what is now the contents of that box an' of that bag."

"That box," says the lan'lord, "contains three hundhred good goold sovereigns, an' the bag sixty-five bad wans."

"Lord Mayor," says Dark Pathrick, "take up that box in wan hand, an' that bag in the other."

The Lord Mayor, all wondherment, did as he was bid; an' the king himself an' the

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whole coort stopped their breaths an' craned their necks to hear what was comin' next.

"Lord Mayor," says Dark Pathrick, "shake that box be the lan'lord's lug."

The Lord Mayor shuck it, an' a mighty great jingle it made.

"Lan'lord, what do ye hear?" says Dark Pathrick.

"The jingle," says the lan'lord, "of three hundhred good goold sovereigns."

"Which pays you," says Dark Pathrick, "for the smell of three hundhred pounds' worth of good dinners."

"Lord Mayor," says Dark Pathrick again, "shake that bag be the lan'lord's lug."

Which the Lord Mayor did, with all the veins of his heart, makin' the divil's own horrible din.

"Lan'lord," says Dark Pathrick, "what's that ye hear?"

"The rattle," says the lan'lord, "of sixty-five bad sovereigns."

"Which pays you," says Dark Pathrick, "for the smell of sixty-five pounds' worth of bad dinners."

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"My vardict," says he, "is given. Go all of yez to yer homes, good people, an' for the future abide in Christian paice!"

For the space of wan minute aafter, ye could hear yerself thinkin' in that coort. Then the applaas that went up shuck the oul' walls of the buildin' tell ye 'd think it was merac'lous it did n't tumble in atop of all. Liwyers an' judges an' genthry, an' every livin' sowl present, ruz to their feet lake wan man an' called on the king to make Dark Pathrick, there an' then, high judge over all Irelan'. "Me own sintiments," says the king. But Dark Pathrick, with the self-same coolness that had stuck to him throughout, got to his feet, an' thanked both the king an' the people, an' sayed he had no desires for the honour, an' he would n't have it. He had, he sayed, done nothin' but what he considhered to be his bounden duty, an' had n't showed any cliverness whatsomiver above plain, blunt common sense. He was glad, he sayed, they appreciated his vardict, an' glad to think that he was the humble means of puttin' a stop to the tar-

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rible state of affairs that existed over this case, an' the tarrible spillin' of blood that had been takin' place an' was goin' day an' daily from bad to worse. He was glad too, he sayed, that those present had come to give in, that beca'se a man come from Donegal, an' was poor an' ill-dhressed, he was n't necessarily ignorant an' a fool. He axed them to thrait the poor an' the sthrainger in future with due respect, thanked them again, wished them all a very good day, an' slipped away.

An' early the next mornin' there was a dark little man, with a small red bundle on a stick, pushin' north on the road from Dublin to Donegal.



**WHEN MYLES MAGUIRE  
MELTED**

**A STORY OF THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY  
PARADE**





## WHEN MYLES MAGUIRE MELTED.

A STORY OF THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY  
PARADE.

### I.

MYLES MAGUIRE's dark countenance had always a stern look on it, but when he reached O'Rourke's letter his look grew a great deal blacker and sterner.

He read it again, aloud, for the benefit of little old Johnnie Gavigan, his clerk; and his tone was cuttingly sarcastic:

"DEAR MR. MAGUIRE:—Next Thursday, you will remember, is Patrick's Day. The men are pressing me for a holiday, or at the least a half-holiday. Two-thirds of them belong to societies that take part in the procession—and some of the men are expected to be there officially. I would like to give them their wish. Won't you please approve? We have progressed so well with the building since the beginning of February that we can easily afford it—

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there is now no doubt but that we will have it finished easily before the expiration of the contract time. Please reply at once saying that I have your approval.

“‘ Faithfully,

“‘ PATRICK ALOYSIUS O’ROURKE.’

“Gavigan, Pathrick Aloysius O’Rourke is too damned impudent to have the nose on him to ask such a thing. And he thinks, too, I can’t see through him. He’s as thransparent as a dry-goods winda to me. The scoundrel means that we wants to sthraddle to some old crate of a horse, the leavings of a livery stable, and wave a square yard of green calico alongside that procession on Pathrick’s Day. What do you think of such mortal impudence, Gavigan?”

Poor Johnnie curled up within himself; for he had been done the immortal honour of being named a marshal for that day; he had put past enough money to hire a horse; and he had been trying to muster up enough courage to ask Mr. Maguire for the holiday. He shrunk in his shell, and did not reply.

## When Myles Maguire Melted.

"Write O'Rourke at once these words, and send them by a messenger: 'I'd see you and the two-thirds of the men who are as big fools as yourself damned first. I am going up there myself on Thursday, to see how many men will be dismissed to the divil for staying away from their work.'—Have you that down?—'If that procession of out-of-works, lazy divils, and tom-fools goes along Twenty-third Street, and if one of your men lifts the tail of their eye to look at them, I'll be there to order you to give him his dismissal.' Let Pathrick Aloysius O'Rourke put that in his pipe and smoke it."

Johnnie Gavigan sighed deeply but softly as he wrote:

"271 BROADWAY, Tuesday morning.

"DEAR MR. O'ROURKE:—Much as I should wish it otherwise, I regret extremely that I cannot possibly afford to let the men get a holiday on the occasion of the coming festival which, as Irishmen, we all honour. I sincerely trust the good men and true who on that day turn out to do honour to St. Patrick and Ireland, will be favoured with glorious weather, and

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that the procession will surpass—if that be possible—those of former years in numbers, respectability, order, and general *éclat*.

“Very sincerely,  
“MYLES MAGUIRE.”

Mr. Maguire, contractor and builder, had been knitting his brows over another letter, whilst Johnnie Gavigan was, with a clamorous pen, scratching the foregoing.

“Gavigan,” said he, “the wurrl’ is going mad.”

Johnnie was not as much startled as might have been expected by this piece of amazing intelligence—and for the good reason that his master had been springing it on him every morning for the last five-and-twenty years.

“Just read that!”

Johnnie took over the documentary evidence, first impressions from which only tended to prove that the world was going inky and going smoky. Where blots of ink did not conceal it, the paper displayed that rich yellow coating which is only to be obtained by careful seasoning in a cabin

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where a considerable quantity of the turf smoke, instead of going out, as intended by the chimney, crawls and creeps and curls, with loving fondness, around the household gods before making its exit by the deficiency at the door-head. The reminiscence that from the document penetrated Johnnie's nostrils brought a big tear into his eye: the roar of Broadway died suddenly, Myles Maguire's office melted away, and Johnnie, a gossoon, barefoot, ragged, and happy, was on a siostog of straw by a turf fire in a little smoky cabin on an Irish hillside, and a clear-skinned, bright-faced woman in a linen cap was spinning, and crooning a soft song in Gaelic. Ah,—

“Gavigan, wake up! or what the devil are ye dhreamin' about? I asked ye to read that letter.”

Johnnie started. And he read (with some difficulty, for the caligraphy was certainly immature):

“CORRACLAMP UPPER, MEENADHRING P. O.,  
“COUNTY OF TYRONE, June the 3d, 1893.

“DEAR UNCKLE MYLES:—I take up my pen to write you these few lines, hoping it

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will find you as thank God it leevs us at present in the best of helth exept wee Jaimsie has the hoop and coff. Dear Unckle Myles I go to school to Master Rainey every day in my life and he says I am a notorayus scollar and that I was born to be a priest, which I want to be very bad. But of course my poor father he has not the muney to spare to make a priest out of me. Michael Burns of Tullyalt that was in America ten yeers and five in Pencillvainy, says it is far cheeper to be a priest in the States. So, as every one comes home tells how rich Unckle Myles is, I thought I would ask you to pay my passage out there and I would then soone ern enough of money to get priested, and I would say my first Mass then for you and I would pay you back my pasage muney very soone. Dear Unckle ont you please to send me it, and its youll be the pround man when Im the parish priest of New York some day please God. My father he cant give me my pasage muney for you kno he has a hard struggil and the spotty cow the one we called the Master bekase she had a pround walk with her just like Master Rainey she got elf-shot on the hill a month agoe and died, and we have only Horny left. My mother she ust always

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say when I was wee, that she would like to see her wee Donoch a priest, but she stopt tocking of it now this many year. She doesnt kno I am writing to you for my pasage or she wouldnt let me, for I asked her to let me write to you for the lone of some muneey to buy another cow, and to buy her a dress, and she got very angry with me and then bust into crying, and she went down to the room and cried a long time with the dore shut. I will be thirteen yeers next bone-fire night, and I am a able big fellow and able to work hard in America. I send you all our loves and my mothers love, for I kno she would send it for she always gives out a prair for you every knight when we are at the Rosary, for God to guard, guide, and prosper Uncle Myles, and keep his heart right. Write soone, and I lay down my pen and ink and remain,

“Your affectionit nefew,

“DONOCH McATEER.

“P.S. Pleese write soone.”

When Johnnie Gavigan laid down the letter he inserted a knuckle under each glass of his spectacles, and forced something out of his blinking eyes, though his employer glared fiercely at him.



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"Sir," said he, with a bold courage that astonished Myles Maguire, "what answer will I give? Or, I suppose you prefer to answer that yourself? Can I get you a draft?"

"Gavigan!" and all of poor Johnnie's impromptu courage was instantly startled out of him—"you *are* an ass!"

If silence gives consent, Johnnie in his still fright might be said to have given sacred affirmation of the statement.

After a little, when Myles Maguire saw that his clerk was properly remorseful, he said in calm firm tones: "There 's no answer, Gavigan, to that foolish youngster's scribble. I showed ye that letter that ye might read it in connexion with the wan from O'Rourke, and see for yourself that the Irish here is as great idiots as at home, and the Irish at home as great idiots as they are here. Here 's these poor fools of O'Rourke's that are wrastlin' with the wurrl' and sthrivin' with all their might just to earn as much as 'ill keep the life in them—here they are wantin' to lose half-a-day to go processshin' with a crowd

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of equally damned fools, thrappin' themselves out in green ribbons, and squanderin' a couple of days' pay for the pleasure of trottin' behind a web of green calico, throwin' out their chests and throwin' up their chins, and steppin' on time to some oul' rantin' air that their great-grandfathers used to dance to. And then here's these people in Irelan'—me own sister, me own sister Ellen, no less—turnin' a child's head with foolish notions about becomin' a priest or a praicher, when it would be fitter (both for themselves and him) that they were teachin' him which fist to put foremost on a spade-handle; and keepin' him at school every day, when it 's in the ditch-sheugh they should have him half the time. No wonder! no wonder! Small wonder there 's poverty and hardships in Irelan', and plenty of want in Ameriky. It 's seven an' thirty years, Gavigan, since I and me little bundle were thrown out of the ship on American soil, without the face of a friend to greet me, or as much as an acquaintance to say, ' There ye are, Myles Maguire, and

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the divil send ye may prosper!’ I was sixteen bare years of age. I bent my back, and put my hands to, the day afther I landed, and for hard years wrought the very soul of me out through me fingers. I met no friends, and made none—what ’s more I wanted none, and would n’t have them. I kept myself clear of all from home: they ’re never a help—always a hindhrance; if they came to me wanst, they soon found their welcome would n’t keep warm for a second visit; and so they were soon shaken off. I saw that in Ameriky, if a man wanted to go ahead, it took him to think of himself, and himself only, all the time; forget Ireland, its Pathrick’s days an’ its poverty. I did that. And so signs on it, Myles Maguire the poor delicate child that then jumped on to a quay at the foot of New York with his belongin’s under his arm, and twenty-two shillin’s and sixpence ha’penny in his pocket, is now Mr. Myles Maguire, contractor and builder, honoured and respected, and wan of the leadin’ men in his line in New York City, with several hundred men in his em-

## When Myles Maguire Melted.

ploy, and a bank account that I 'll say nothin' of bekase I 'm not a boastin' man. Gavigan, there 's an example for yer foolish Irish to copy afther! What do ye say to that, Gavigan?"

Johnnie, as he stroked his beard, did not reply audibly. But he was thinking. "I am only a poor clerk myself, worth just sixteen dollars a week, and with a wife and family, and a struggle with the wurrl' always on me hands,—yet, Myles Maguire with the big bank account, and no wan in the wurrl' to fret about but yerself, I would cry bitterly if I was compelled to swap places with you, an' have take over your heart into the bargain."

Johnnie Gavigan was, of course, one of the foolish Irish.

## II.

"A GLORYUS day, this, for the procession, sir." Myles Maguire was standing on the rear platform of a Broadway car, and by way of reply to the remark scowled severely at the conductor who made it, and scowled at the bunch of

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

shamrocks he sported in his cap. The conductor, quite disconcerted, whistled up "God save Ireland!" and repeated the remark to the next man who boarded. And when at the sharp turn on Fourteenth Street the conductor sung out "Hold fast!" *after* Mr. Maguire had only just saved himself from being thrown off the car, Mr. Maguire felt he would like to kick that conductor. A poor workingman, with his little lunch in his hand, coming on the car here, raised his hat to the shamrock—whereat Mr. Maguire muttered something impolite, and fumed inwardly as if a personal insult had been flung in his face. "And maybe," he added to himself, "that poor fool has n't the second quarter to rub against the first." A few blocks farther, an old woman who had been helped on by a policeman, fixing her eyes on the shamrock, muttered a prayer in Gaelic. The proud conductor plucked from his hat a sprig of the shamrock (though it cost him a pang) and presented it to the old woman, who kissed it passionately. Mr. Maguire, disdaining even to convey an order to the

## When Myles Maguire Melted.

conductor, himself pulled the cord, and bounced from the car at the next corner. "Damn yez all!" he said, "I 'll walk it." He did walk it. But the reverence of that poor workingman, and the passionate love of that old woman, for a bit of a green weed preyed upon his mind—*preyed* upon it. "Here am I, Myles Maguire, contractor and builder and rich man, without either time or inclination for this—this—damned nonsense; and there 's people as poor as God made them, an' the wurrl' against them, and they—they—oh, damn it all!" Flung out from windows were green flags, to which the burly drivers of two waggon raised their hats as they passed, their eyes dancing with some gleeful remembrance. Most of the waggoners had stuck upon their horses' harness little green flags, each of which represented two schooners of lager beer foregone. Hotel-waiters, motormen, hundreds of hurrying foot passengers, sported some piece of green—a very few, with pardonable pride, displayed the shamrock. The brightness of the morning seemed, in the

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eyes of all these, to blend with the brightness of heart that shone out. And, strangely, the very poorest seemed to carry as bright a face as the most well-to-do. Mr. Myles Maguire, contractor and builder and rich man, could not help seeing this, though he would like to have shut both his eyes and his heart to it all. Myles remembered how a poor devil with whom he worked, ages ago, used to excite his sarcastic laughter by declaring that half-an-ounce of happiness was worth a waggonload of gold. And now here were many poor devils with nought but their bare hands between them and starvation, and the sun was on their faces and in their hearts; yet here was he with his money-bags, and for five-and-twenty years he had not known how to smile! Evidently these people were labouring under the delusion that money did not mean everything, and was not the aim and end of existence. Somewhere, there was something radically wrong, Myles Maguire confessed to himself.

At the Victor building on Twenty-third

## When Myles Maguire Melted.

Street and Fourth Avenue, which sported the sign, "Myles Maguire, Contractor and Builder," the men had momentarily stopped work to shy cents and nickels, a couple of dimes, at a dirty Italian, who had been grinding a travesty on "Patrick's Day" out of his hand-organ, and who then, by way of thanks, gave them a representation of a wretch dying by slow torture which, by a desperate stretch of imagination, they were supposed to fancy "The Wearin' of the Green"—and went on. Myles had remained half-a-block away till the agony was ended; and when he came up, he found that a hunchbacked old fellow, who was at work by the side-path, had stuck up a little ten-cent Irish flag on a barrel by his side. Myles stood looking from the man to the flag, and from the flag back to the man.

"That 's a gay mornin', misther," the old fellow said, going on with his work.

After a little Myles Maguire asked, "How long are you from Irelan', frien'?"

"Ah, throth too long. Nineteen years, come May."



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"An', tell me, do ye iver think of Ire-lan' now?"

The old fellow looked up at him side-ways for a moment. "Is n't it early in the mornin' ye 're beginnin' yer larkin'?" he said then.

"Do ye ever expect to go back to Ire-lan'?"

"With God's help. With God's help." The old fellow sighed as he said it. "I mane to die in Ire-lan'. I was back there seven years ago this summer. If money was plantier it's few summers would miss me that I would n't be back. I have me wife an' childer there, that I've got to save for."

"I suppose ye send them money every year?"

"Every year! I struggle to sen' them, with God's help, a thrifle of money every month. When I'm in constant work I can well afford it. I earn big pay—ten dollars a week. We have two as brave sons as ever God bliss'd a father an' mother with, an' we 're givin' them a good schoolin', an' sthrivin' to make somethin' respectable out

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iv them; we 're puttin' wan iv them on for the clargy, an' the other 's goin' to be a schoolmasther. An' when I help to pay for the livin' an' ediacation of them both—for the little patch of lan' would n't go far to keep them, let alone ediacate them—I can't afford to go back to oul' Irelan' often. Another few years' hard work, an' me sons 'ill take me over, an' meself an' the oul' woman 'ill niver know want or woe, afther."

Myles Maguire was reflective for some time.

"Are ye goin' to the parade to-day?" he said.

"Och, sweet good luck to the conthrac-tor, no! Bad wind to him! An' he 's an Irishman too, they say. His name 's Irish enough. But the heart in him—if he 's got the like at all, at all, which I misdoubt—must be black. Sarra saize him! If a tinth of bad prayers the men has been prayin' on him these two days be heerd, I would n't like to be in his boots. A nig-gard he is, an' he 'll niver be anything else." Mr. Maguire was feeling slight-

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ly uncomfortable. "May Sent Pathrick chalk it upon the cross-bar iv heaven's gates, to stare the villain in the face, an' turn him away if he has the impidence to thravel tor'st them afther he give his last gasp. No, I 'm not goin'; an' that 's the second time only that I 've missed the parade in the nineteen years I 'm in Ameriky."

A mischievous American scamp snatched with him the little flag, and went hastily on his way down Fourth Avenue. The old fellow was stooped, and had his back turned. Myles Maguire, observing the thing, was swaying between two impulses—but the hunched back, the gray hair, the patient industry of the poor old soul, and a something else which he did not recognise, curiously appealed to him who for seven and thirty years had kept his heart free from all such weaknesses. He started at a run after the miscreant. The latter doubled around into Twenty-second Street. But Myles Maguire was so close upon him that he was induced to drop the little flag on the path. Myles followed a bit farther,

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for a novel feeling of righteous indignation was upon him, and he now felt even more eagerly desirous of kicking this fellow than the be-shamrocked conductor. But the fellow was too fast for him, and laughed back over his shoulder at Myles, who then turned and picked up the flag. He was holding it in his hand, and gazing at it in an abstracted fashion, when an astounding and very forceful box on the ear, making him drop the little flag from his grasp, drove him dazed and staggering on to the street, where he just escaped being run down by a cab, but did not escape cabby's lavish and whole-hearted abuse.

"Ho-o-o! ye scoundrell ye! ye thought yerself purty smart, did n't ye?" his old hunchbacked friend was shouting back at him, shaking his fist in which he bore off again the flag. "Ho-o-o! ye oul' vagabone! who'd have thought ye had so much scoundrelism in ye? Ho-o-o! but I'd like to bleach ye if I had the time, and was n't loath to durty me hands on ye! Ho-o-o!" and he disappeared into Fourth Avenue, leaving Myles Maguire still standing on

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the street, rubbing the side of his head, and trying to arrange his dazed wits.

When he got them fairly arranged, he strode back to the Victor building, boiling with wrath.

The old man had planted his little flag again, and was proceeding with his work, but he saw Myles Maguire coming. He straightened himself up instantly, rolled back his sleeves, fell into fighting posture, and defiantly yelled, "Come on, oul' Belzy-bubb!"

"Sir!" shouted Patrick Aloysius O'Rourke, who, by good luck, was now on the ground, "what do ye mean?"

"I mane to whang seven divils out of that oul' curmudgeon, who 's afther thryin' to make a hare iv me, an' stale me flag in-till the bargain. Only I caught the waf' iv his tails disappearin' roun' the corner, he was gone with it."

"Hish! that 's Mr. Maguire, the con-thractor for the Victor."

"I don't care a brass fardin' if he was Sent Pether himself, an' conthraclin' for purgatory, I would n't stand the same

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thraitment at his hands," and he looked the contractor defiantly in the eye, as he proclaimed this.

Myles Maguire's wrath evaporated — even to his own astonishment. Determined to be astoundingly generous, he deigned even to explain. He told how the thing really did happen.

"Luke here now," said the old fellow, when he had heard him out. "Ye don't mend matthers at all, at all, be lyin' over it. I circumvanted ye, an' we are as we stud at the beginnin'. I forgive ye, but niver thry the same thrick again on me. Good-mornin' an' good luck to ye now. Since ye won't help me with me work, don't hindher me."

As Myles Maguire sneaked into the building with Patrick Aloysius O'Rourke, he felt that abject smallness which falls upon a man who has been discovered in a very mean act.

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### III.

WHEN Mr. Maguire informed Mr. O'Rourke that, on second consideration, he had decided that the men on the Victor building should have a half-holiday, Mr. O'Rourke was only slightly surprised. But when he got down to 271 Broadway, and there notified the patient and faithful Johnnie Gavigan that *he* should have a half-holiday, Johnnie was startled.

"Gavigan, what time does that parade start, and where from?"

"It starts," said the bewildered, elated Johnnie, "at 2:30 from Madison Square."

"Hum! Well, good mornin', Gavigan, an' a pleasant day to ye."

Johnnie went off in a half-dazed way. "There's something either wrong with me or with Misther Maguire," Johnnie said to himself—"an' I 'm afeerd it 's with Misther Maguire."

And when, three hours after, Johnnie, in one of the few lucid intervals he had on horseback (for the honour of riding a horse once a year far exceeded the pleasure in

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poor Johnnie's case), noticed on the fringe of the procession Myles Maguire decorated with a great green sash, Johnnie only just escaped losing altogether his normally elusive seat.

Yes, Myles Maguire, contractor and builder, for the first time in his thirty-seven years' sojourn in America, had come to join in this procession of "out-of-works, lazy divils, and tom-fools." He had tried to drop casually into the ranks at the first convenient opportunity, but a mounted marshal ordered him "back to the divil out iv that, an' join yer own section." When Myles Maguire looked at the marshal, he discovered in him the hunch-backed old fellow, his own workman, who had that morning generously forgiven him for a mean trick of which he had not been guilty.

Myles melted away backwards. He tried to impose himself upon several succeeding sections, but with equal ill-luck each time. At the tail of the parade only he found welcome—amongst a band of irregulars.



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The welcoming shouts and cheers that greeted them along the route, the handkerchiefs and the flags waved to them from window and housetop, every man in the long procession took personally to himself, and waxed proud over, and strutted. Before he had covered a score of blocks Myles Maguire was the vainest man, and had the most imposing strut of all that vast procession; and to the awkward-limbed lengthy fellow who processhed on his left, he proudly imparted the intelligence that this was "a big day for oul' Irelan'." The big fellow's reply—rather a remark to himself—"I wish to the Lord they could see us in Meenticor," discovered to Myles that he walked with one from his own parish. Both, to their delight, soon found that they were old comrades and schoolfellows. "Myles Maguire," said Long Jamie Haraghey, "I 've got in me pocket here a pint of potteen that was brewed on the backside of Knocknagher. When we get to the picnic grounds we 'll have a jolly good slug for oul' times' sake."

And, in Morningside Park where they

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picnicked, Myles and Long Jamie tasted the potteen, and transported themselves again to Tyrone. For more than thirty years Myles had wasted very little thought, and certainly less speech, upon Tyrone, yet it was surprising how freshly and vividly old times, old friends, old scenes crowded his memory and made his tongue glib.

"An' the Masther, too," said Long Jamie; "ye mind the times we had with Masther Muldoon of Pulvainey—eh, Myles?"

"Faith an' I do," said Myles, smiling a reflective smile. "Do ye mind the day Micky Meehan made him sit down on his casthor?"

"Ha! ha! I do—I do! That was a hard day. An' do you mind the day we tied him to the stanchion in the school-gavel? Another wild day."

"I mind that. An' I mind the day he made you mount me on your back till he 'd flog me for br'akin' in Donal O'Donnell's doore."

"I mind that, Myles, as if it was yea-

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therday. Beca'se I was so long he thought he 'd make me useful in some way. He called me his assistant taicher, beca'se on my back he flogged larnin' and manners intill yez. An' do you mind, Myles, the day you an' me fought an' malavoqued other at the Lazy Bush, beca'se I sayed your mother counted the praties when she was puttin' them in the pot?"

"Ha! ha! ha! Upon me soul I do that, Jamie. What a throuncin' match it was! I always thought meself a purty boxer; but that day, Jamie, you went within an ace of knockin' the consait out i' me. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Within an ace iv knockin' the consait out i' ye? But, Myles, don't ye mind I *did* knock the consait clane out i' ye? Ye mind how I doubled ye over the stone-ditch, an' pounded ye till ye called 'Marcy!'"

"But beggin' yer pardon, Jamie, yer mim'ry 's *slightly* at fault. You mind it was *me* that doubled *you* over the ditch, an' ludhered ye till *you* shouted 'Marcy!'"

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"Myles Maguire," said Jamie feelingly, "I'm ashamed i' ye."

"Long Jamie Haraghey," Myles said, "nobbut *I*'m heartily ashamed i' *you*."

"I'm sorry indeed that ye force it out i' me—but, Misther Maguire, I must say ye 're a liar."

"Misther Haraghey," said Mr. Maguire, "*I*'m very sorry indeed to say it—but, you 're a notorious liar."

"I see no other way out iv it," said Mr. Haraghey, "than to go into the grove beyont an' settle it."

"Done!" said Mr. Maguire.

In the silence and obscurity of the grove both doffed coat and vest, tied their suspenders round their waists, and rolled up their sleeves, just as they had done forty years before, under the Lazy Bush. They squared up at each other.

"Jamie," said Myles, "I don't like to strike ye in coul' blood. Please to aggirivate me."

"All right, Myles. Used n't yer poor mother (God rest her!) count the praties when she 'd be puttin' them in the pot?"

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"Ye lie, ye scoundhril!" yelled Myles venomously; and he emphasized the remark by a terrific blow on Long Jamie's stomach.

In an instant a hot and fierce encounter was in progress. Myles found he had not forgotten a certain set of the thumb-knuckle which digging into his antagonist used to deal damage in the after-school fights, and made him an object of admiration, respect, and even awe, amongst his comrades. On the other hand, Jamie made good use of the swinging sledgehammer stroke that half a century ago he had cultivated and made a specialty. For five minutes they pitched into each other with hearty good will. They were once more boxing beneath the Lazy Bush, with encouraging comrades about them; and they did not care whether Masther Muldoon saw them or not, for they were fighting for glory, and absorbed in the dream of it.

But Long Jamie Haraghey was not as young as he used to be, nor his wind as good. After five minutes he was puffing hard; and then a timely and happily

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placed punch of Myles', put in the neighbourhood of Jamie's gastronomic machinery, did him up. He sat down hurriedly, and, when he could, he gasped out:

"M-M-Myles—that 's—enou-nough!"

To tell the truth, Myles was not sorry. Still, he had a duty to perform.

"Jamie," said he, as he stood over his victim, "did me poor mother count the praties goin' intill the pot?"

"She—did n't—Myles."

"Jamie, who 's the liar—me or you?"

"I 'm the liar, Myles."

"An' Jamie, who axed for 'marcy' that day under the Lazy Bush?"

This one gave poor Jamie lengthened pause.

"I say again, Jamie, who?" Myles had the awe-inspiring knuckle scientifically set.

Jamie saw the knuckle, and he said:

"It was me axed for 'marcy,' Myles,—me." And he added soliloquisingly: "Though I 'm rammed if I believe it."

"That 's all right, Jamie, give us a grip of yer fist. So long as ye give in to the

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truth, ye 're free to believe what plaises ye."

They shook hands heartily. Myles helped up his fallen—friend. Each helped to dress and smooth out the other; and then they went back to the picnic party, spent a most jovial evening; and went home mellow both, and happy.

To young Donoch McAteer, of Corral-clamp Upper, Meenadring P. O., County of Tyrone, and Ireland, Johnnie Gavigan, next day, addressed a letter containing a respectable check, and a promise to pay all charges incurred in polishing a priest out of the aforesaid Donoch. "I have been forgetful in the past," the letter said, "but for the time to come, please God, your poor mother will not find me so. I am going home this summer to find if Knock-nagher hill flames as yellow with whim-flowers as it used to do, and if the trouts are as plenty as ever in the burn at the back of Phelim McGinley's garden (God rest him!)."

At many subsequent Patrick's day parades, Myles Maguire, in the saddle (some-

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times), was a proud and conspicuous—if unsteady—figure.

Myles Maguire went home again and again for many summers, and his eyes filled one Corpus Christi that he sat in the old chapel and heard Father Donoch McAteer of the black head and handsome thoughtful face read his first Mass—for him, Myles Maguire. And when he turned to look at his sister Ellen, her bowed head and frame were trembling as she sobbed with joy: "Myles, I'm happy an' content to die any time God calls me now. May the good God bliss an' reward you, me brother."

"Whisht! arrah whisht, with ye, woman!" Myles said reprimandingly. But the big tears ran from his eyes, and sunk with Ellen's into the sacred clay floor.





## **PATHRICK'S PROXY**



## PATHERICK'S PROXY.

AFTER a deal of peregrinating, Jamie Managhan, of Muintir, had pitched upon old Paudeen a-Mullin's daughter Rosie as a suitable wife for himself; and after driving the devil's own hard bargain with old Paudeen, he had got two springing cows, a bullockeen, bed and bedding, half a chest of line, and forty-seven pounds in dry cash settled upon her. And the wedding was to come off on the Thursday before Shrove. Jamie was mightily pleased with himself; for not alone had he got a greater dowry than he expected, but—what was to him almost equally pleasing—he considered he had overreached Paudeen a-Mullin, getting out of him seven pounds and a bullockeen over and above the most that Paudeen had intended to bestow upon Rosie. For Jamie Managhan seemed to live for the purpose of overreaching his simpler neighbours.

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To Jamie came Pathrick MacCalliog (whose farm marched his) some days before Jamie's wedding-day, and taking him out and around to the gable of the house, imparted to him nervously that he, too, wished to take a wife unto himself.

"Jamie," Pathrick said, "the notion iv marryin' this Shrovetide is sthrong on me."

"Throth an' it 's time for it," said Jamie—for Pathrick would never see forty. "Who is the wife to be?"

"That I don't know for sartin yet, Jamie. It 's what I want to consult ye about. Shamus-a-Match, the beggarman, has brought me word iv a likely girl in Tyroo, wan Mary McShan, who has got eighty pounds iv a fortune—a laigacy left her be an aunt in Ameriky—an' five head o' cattle."

"Whew-ew-ew!" said Jamie Managhan. "Yer bread 's baked, Pathrick."

"Not yet, not yet. Ye know I niver could put the comether on a woman. I want you to coort her for me, Jamie, an' it is n't the first or twinty-first neighbourly turn I 'll have to thank ye for."

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"Don't mention it, Pathrick. I 'll do that, an' welcome." But Jamie was heartily grieved that *he* had n't heard of Mary McShan a couple of weeks earlier.

Now, Jamie and Pathrick were not fair specimens of the Muintir boys, who courted for the girl's sake oftener than they did for the dowry's.

As Shrove was hurrying on, there was little time to be lost. So Shamus-a-Match was sent, a courier, to Tyroo to announce that Pathrick, with Jamie, was going up to court there next night. Shamus had instructions to give Mary McShan and her people a glowing account of "the way Pathrick had on him"—which is to say, the worldly circumstances he was in—and Shamus's imagination was stimulated with a silver token. So that when Jamie with the bottle of whiskey in his pocket led the blushing Pathrick into the McShan household and introduced him, on the night following, there was a bright fire, a clean hearth, and a hearty welcome for them.

But before they did go into McShan's, Jamie took good care to call at a shebeen

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close by, and have the items of the dowry indorsed. "An' now that we 're sure iv that, Pathrick," he said, "we 'll show the McShans we 're not mane, by makin' no mention iv her fortune. We 'll say we 've come to see the girl, an' that if she plaises, it 's all we want. I have found, Pathrick, it always pays to be generous, when ye know ye 're not losin'. Now," he added, "you coort the oul' couple, an' I 'll put the comether on the daughter." And this plan of campaign was faithfully observed.

When they were seated at Harry McShan's hearth, Jamie Managhan requested of Mrs. McShan a glass, and produced the big bottle, out of which he poured a drop, with which he stepped across to Mrs. McShan. "Here, oul' woman," he said, "wet yer whistle with this." And when she hesitated about taking it, Jamie encouraged her with, "Arrah, bad scrán to ye, woman dear, an' throw it over without makin' faces at it." She drunk welcome and health to the strangers, in a portion of the glass, and despite Jamie's emphatic pro-

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testations, returned the remainder. Jamie supplemented this, and gave it to Harry McShan, and next offered it to the bashful Mary, who put it to her lips out of compliment to the company, and returned it. "Pathrick," said Jamie, "throw over this yerself, to put heart in ye. We 're here on *business*, the night," he remarked to Mrs. McShan. And Mrs. McShan replied: "Well, yez is welcome—yez is welcome." Finally, Jamie poured out a generous glass for himself, and, still standing in the centre of the fireside group, made an appropriate little speech expressive of the genuine delight it gave him to find himself in such a clane and daicint house, and in the midst of such daicint, nice people, than whom he 'd fare far an' thravel long afore he 'd meet with daicinter or nicer; then noddèd and wished a very good health to each in turn, and threw off the glass at a gulp. He put the cork in the bottle and laid it, with the glass, on the dresser, and then resumed his seat. Pathrick MacCalliog was bursting with pride for him.

Harry McShan, having lit the pipe, ten-



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dered it to him. "Have a dhraw," he said. As he pulled he remarked: "Pathrick MacCalliog an' me have come here on *business* (as I sayed afore) the night."

"Ah!" said Harry McShan, a remark that was non-committing.

Mary McShan, as she carded wool, turned her face farther from the fire till the shade fell on it.

"Pathrick MacCalliog is in notions iv marryin', an' takin' in a woman," Jamie proceeded.

After giving Harry and his wife time to look all over the blushing Pathrick, and to express their approval by saying, in chorus, "Well, that 's no harm," Jamie went on again: "Pathrick, wantin' a good, sensible, studdy girl, an' a girl at the same time that he would n't be ashamed to be seen with on a Sunday, inquired, an' heerd tell of your daughter Mary McShan." And then Jamie diplomatically paused again to feel his ground.

Harry McShan and his good woman brought Pathrick under inspection again, *this time* more searchingly than before.

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"Hum!" said Harry, when he had satisfied himself.

Mrs. McShan resumed her work—imposing a large patch on a pair of Harry's old breeches, on a place where first a patch is requisitioned. Mary McShan got her face into a deep shade, and carded at an impetuous rate.

Harry McShan was the devil of a badger to draw, Jamie Managhan acknowledged to himself, and he must yield him another inch.

"So," said Jamie, "we 've come to see the girl—an' you, sir."

Harry deliberately crossed his legs, and crossed his arms.

"What way has Pathrick MacCalliog on him?" he said point-blank.

"Come, Pathrick, spaik up for yerself," said Jamie. "Pull over here an' sit beside Misther McShan" (it was a policy of Jamie's to *Mister* any one from whom concessions were wished), "an' I 'll say a word to Mary. Misther McShan, you 'll find me frien' Pathrick both warm an' well-to-do, a snug farm, a nate house, an'

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a good way on him for a wife. The girl that sits down in Pathrick's 'll find she has n't made a mistake. Sit here, Pathrick."

When Jamie got beside Mary, he took hold of the wool-cards, with which she was industriously working. "Mary a gradh," said he, "let me have a houl't iv them for a little; it 's sthrainin' yer purty eyes ye are, bendin' over them so long." And Jamie began carding like an experienced hand.

"Now, Mary," said he, "don't ye think ye 'd like to be cardin' in yer own house, for yer own man?"

"Get away with ye!"

"An' let Pathrick back intill this place again? Very well an' good."

"Sit down with ye! Sit down, I say!" and she pulled him into his seat again.

"I axed ye, then, Mary, is n't it time ye wor thinkin' iv marryin'?"

"Ah," composedly, "there is n't any mighty hurry on me."

"Don't tell me, Mary—to a sprightly young girl like ye, a man is no mad dog."

"That depends," sighed Mary.

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"I know well it does; but it is n't in every ditch-sheuch nowadays ye 'll pick up a brave man with a good sittin'-down."

"Lake——?"

"Lake me frien' Pathrick, beyont."

Mary eyed Pathrick critically, as if, far from stealing furtive glances at him since he had come in, she now looked at him for the first time.

"Well?" said Jamie, when she had completed the inspection.

"If he was in Spain he would n't be burnt for his beauty," she replied drily.

So true was this home-thrust that Jamie found enough ado to keep, in his friend's interest, a grave face.

"What way has he?" said Mary; for poor Mary had been raised up by a worldly father and mother.

"Come closer," said Jamie. And Mary hitched her stool till their two pair of knees met, and their bent heads were only a few feet apart.

"Pathrick has ten acres iv clay-land, an' he has ten head iv cattle—four iv them milk-cows."

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"What rent 's on him?"

"Plenty, God knows. Five poun' half-a-crown—an' there 's always a heavy cut in Banajh. My farm matches Pathrick's—but mine has the bottoms, an' his is on the bank iv the hill. It keeps wan cartin' manure to it, for it runs out as fast as it 's put on. Otherwise Pathrick's farm is a good wan; barrin' that he always has a poor crop i' corn on it, an' his meadow never comes to anything—a fine farm indeed, an' grows as good aitin' praties (maily an' floury) as any from here to there; only they 're generally small, an' thin in the groun', an' a power iv rot among them—fine praties indeed, far better nor mine, though, iv course, I take two barrel i' praties off my groun' for the wan barrel poor Pathrick gets."

"Yours must be good lan'. What rent 's on ye?" Mary asked innocently.

"Why, a thrifle iv fifteen shillin's only, less nor Pathrick's; though the parish gives in that accordin' to the qualities i' the two lan's, I should, in justice, be payin' two poun's more."

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"What about Pathrick's stock?"

"Pathrick has a gran' turn-out iv stock. He 's able to keep on that farm iv his ten head iv cattle, as I sayed—which is within five head iv all I 'm able to keep meself. Splendid milkers he has, too. I do believe his four head iv milkers gives, accordingly, near as much as my five. Iv course, poor Pathrick, owin' to the quality iv his grass, does n't get butter off his milk at the same rate I do, though, sure enough, he makes remarkable butter—butter that goes in the market for only a penny a poun' less nor me own; an' it 's a very few iv the farmers in our parts can chase me as close as that.

"Pathrick then has a good, studdy, responsible lump in a horse-baste that gets through considerable odds an' ends iv work, considherin' his age an' tadiusness. Pathrick keeps the heart up in him; he gives him the wan-half iv his corn produce. An' when the baste desaives him, I 've always made Pathrick welcome to wan i' mine—the gray coult. But Pathrick intends buying' a good young horse—has

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been intendin' buyin' wan for these past six years—when he has the cash to spare.”

“When he has the cash to spare?”

“Yis, sartintly. Ye don't know Pathrick, the high-spirited fella he is. He 'd scorn to take a loan. As often as there 's fingers an' toes on me, I 've sayed till him—as a neighbour should—‘ Now, Pathrick, if ye need the price iv a horse, fifteen poun', or twinty poun', or thirty poun', ye know I 'm yer neighbour, an' ye 'll offend me very sore entirely if ye pass meself an' take the loan off any other man. When ye want the money, don't be backward, say it to me an' I 'll count down the yalla boys intill yer han'.' But no! Pathrick 'ud go without a horse at all, at all, afore he 'd take the loan off me. That 's Pathrick for ye—a fine proud fella.”

“Pride 's a very fine thing. Pity it can't keep the heat in the hearthstone,” said Mary, drily. “An' that reminds me—how is Pathrick off for turf?”

“Turf?” said Jamie. “Ah, the divil a man in the parish 'ud have as fine a stack iv turf, or as big a wan, as Pathrick, if

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he 'd only the turf-bank. He has a house that 's both snug an' tidy; an' the only thing it wants to keep it warm an' comfortable in the winter-time is the turf."

"An' has n't he got a turf-bank?"

"Arrah, woman dear, no blame till him, for what he cannot help. If Pathrick only had such a turf-bank as I have, there 'd be few turf-stacks in the parish he would n't bait—he 'd purty near have as good a turf-stack as meself."

"An' what sort iv fire can such a man keep in the winther?"

"Arrah, the norrah so badly off a woman 'ud be in the winther in Pathrick's. Breakin' bramble off the thorn-bushes, to help out the fire, 'ill always keep her warm enough."

"To the dickens with him for a man. Where is he comin' here lookin' for a woman!"

"Arrah, woman dear, houl' yer tongue. Every man wants a woman."

"Nor the half iv every man! There 'd be some sense in the like i' you, now, comin' lookin' for a wife." And Mary here



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took the cards from Jamie, and began working them industriously.

"Eh?" said Jamie. "Is it me? But where would the likes i' me get a wife?" And Jamie sighed.

"Without goin' far," Mary said, with her eyes fixed intently on her work.

"I wish I knew where!" Jamie sighed again.

Mary was exasperated with such stupidity, so she said cuttingly: "Wish in wan han', an' spit in the other, an' see which is the weightiest."

"Sure—sure, ye would n't have me yerself?" diffidently.

"Ye 're not so sure iv that till ye ax."

"Will ye?"

"With a heart an' a half."

Mary got up from her work instantly, and, going to the room, called down her father and mother.

"Jamie, how did ye do for me?" Pathrick whispered.

"Pathrick, the best I cud. She 's very long-headed an' hard to get around. But I have hopes, Pathrick—I have hopes."

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After the lapse of half an hour Jamie was called down to the room. And when he came up again, he motioned to Pathrick. Both bade the household good-night, and departed.

As they took the road homeward, Jamie broke gently to Pathrick—very, very gently—the news that his proposal had not been received with favour. To Jamie's surprise, Pathrick did not grieve as he should at this sad intelligence. And seeing this, Jamie ventured to add that Harry McShan had plumped a proposal at himself, and, taken by surprise, he had consented. Pathrick only said, "Ah, indeed!" to this. And after a while: "Well, Jamie, I wish both in yez luck, an' all kinds iv prosperity"—which Jamie considered nothing short of magnanimous on Pathrick's part. And, "Let me tell ye, Pathrick," said Jamie with enthusiasm, "I 'm goin' to fit ye up in a wife. How would Rosie Mullin suit ye?" Pathrick only feared that such good luck could not be in store for him. "Pathrick, avic, afore this time the morra night," said

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Jamie, "I 'm goin' to have Rosie promised ye."

And, sure enough, on the night following, Jamie led Pathrick to Paudeen a-Mullin's, convinced Paudeen a-Mullin that he, Jamie, was the most unfortunate choice for a son-in-law in all the countryside, and at the same time pictured in such glowing colours the perfections of Pathrick that Paudeen was proud and pleased to exchange—more especially as he saved seven pounds off the dowry thereby; and the wedding was fixed for the night originally agreed upon.

Jamie, too, acted as best man to Pathrick on the trying occasion; and soon as the ordeal was over, lest Pathrick should entertain any shade of regret for what might have been, Jamie took him aside, whilst the boys kissed the bride, and comforted him with the assurance:

"Ye 're now married on Rosie, Pathrick; an' next Chewsday night I 'll be married on Mary McShan, an' let me tell ye that ye 've got a long sight the best bargain iv the two."

## Pathrick's Proxy.

"I know it, Jamie," said Pathrick, calmly; "I know it. Afther ye 'd gone up to the room to the McShan's that night, to hear their decision, I was in a cowl' sweat lest they 'd consent."

"What! For why, Pathrick?"

"Beca'se," said Pathrick, "their sarvint-boy (he 's a near frien' i' me own, be his mother) put me on me guard that they 'd got an Ameriky lettther that very mornin' with the bad news that Mary's aunt's will had been upset, so there would n't come a three ha'pence iv it to poor Mary."

And it was so.



**CORNEY CLERY'S BALANCE**



## CORNEY CLERY'S BALANCE.

THE fast thriving town of Aughnadhrin needed a market-house. There was no doubt of that. The seven firkins of butter which used to frequent the square on the occasion of the Tuesday market had during the last year suddenly gone up to ten. And eleven bags of potatoes and six bags of oats were now exposed for sale, where formerly there were only nine bags of potatoes and two bags of oats. Moreover, to keep pace with the increasing demand, a regular fowl-market had been started, which was weekly thronged by Mrs. Dolan, of the Long Bog, with four hens—two muffies, to wit, a marley and a spreckly; and as she would persist in appraising her birds at three ha'pence a head more than the most generous of the inhabitants of Aughnadhrin wished to give, Mrs. Dolan fetched back, market after market, her two muffies, the marley and the



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spreckly — thus firmly establishing the fowl - market. True, Pathrick Blake, of Corabbor, fetched into the third fowl-market an *eelyun* of his wife Marg'et's chickens; but Mrs. Dolan, rightly aggrieved by this attempt at unfair competition, heaped upon him such bitter reproaches for a "low, mane, underminin' villian, who 'd come an' fetch in his dhirty chickens without any other rhyme or raison than to do a sthugglin' poor woman out of her market," that poor Pathrick was shamed into quitting the town with more speed and a lower head than when he came in; and after that Mrs. Dolan had the entire trade of the fowl-market all to herself, the two muffies, and the marley and spreckly.

Anyhow, it was evident that a place of the growing importance and commercial activity of Aughnadhrin needed a market-house. Everyone from Michael O'Gara, "Licensed to Sell Wine, Spirits, XX Porter, and Tobacco for Consumption on the Premises," down to Rory Keenaghan, bill-poster, newsboy, pennyboy, and town fool,

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saw and admitted this, and said it should be remedied. So Michael O'Gara, on a day, leaving Rory Keenaghan in charge of the premises, with strict orders to allow all in, but none out, till he should return, bided him to Father Tom, and invited his co-operation in founding a market-house; and with Father Tom then proceeded to enlist for the project Peter Darragh, the postmaster (who sold spools likewise, and ha'penny surprise packets to the rising generation), and Manis Loughrey—a rival of Michael's in the tobacco trade, but whose sign did not require customers to remain on the premises while they consumed the article. And all four, sitting them down in Peter's little parlour, resolved themselves into the Aughnadhrin Town Improvement Committee, and proposed and carried unanimously, "That Aughnadhrin do have a market-house, same to be erected in the Square"—which Square, by the way, was an isosceles triangle, having its apex opposite Michael O'Gara's door—forthwith the committee to subscribe as much of the wherewithal as convenient on

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the following day, and trust in God for the rest, repaying themselves for the outlay by farming the market tolls. And Peter Darragh, who was considered handy at the pen, was ordered to send an account of the project and an advertisement for a contractor to the *Dhrimstevlin Universe*. And the next issue of the *Universe* came out with a glowing leading article on the phenomenal progress of the important inland town of Aughnadhrin, which had at last determined upon having a market-house all to itself. The article referred in eloquent terms to the rapid increase in the supply of butter, corn, and potatoes, which now poured into its Square on Tuesdays; characterized "the lately established fowl-market" as "a most unqualified success," alluded in stately periods to the public spirit that animated the breasts of its prominent and patriotic citizens and business men—"their well-beloved soggarth, the Rev. Thomas O'Rourke, P.P., V.G.; Peter Darragh, Esq., the genial postmaster; and Messrs. Michael O'Gara, P.L.G., and Manis Loughrey, men whose names

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were household words throughout the length and breadth of the parish of Aughnadhrin"—the Esq. vouchsafed Peter being a *quid pro quo* for the advertisement. There were upwards of three dozen copies of that issue of the *Universe* sold in Aughnadhrin, and Peter was kept busy addressing the read copies to the purchasers' friends in England, Scotland, Australia, and the States.

Many eager contractors called to see "the Plan and Specification, which might be inspected" (so the advertisement in the *Universe* put it) "at Mr. Peter Darragh's Post Office and General Goods Store in Aughnadhrin"; and Peter, with a piece of chalk, drew out for each upon the largest and cleanest flag on the floor the aforementioned plan, recited from memory the specification, which, amongst other clauses, stipulated that (a) no tender at a larger sum than forty-five pounds should be considered by the committee; and (b) the contractor should, as the work progressed, receive payment to the amount of thirty pounds, the balance, if any, to re-

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main due till such time as the increased tolls pouring into the committee's treasury would enable them to discharge the debt. For thirty pounds was the full paid-up capital of the Aughnadhrin Town Improvement Committee. This stipulation invariably gave the contractors pause. They whistled and "did n't know about that," and would have to take time to consider it, with the result that Peter Darragh was left to pine with a plan and specification—of which no reputable contractor could be induced to relieve him—weighting his breast. Then the committee began descending upon the haunts of contractors in the vain hope of bagging one; and the contractors got to keeping outlooks posted, and taking to their heels when apprised that the committee with Peter and the plan and specification were upon them. And for the six weeks during which the Town Improvement Committee were daily hot upon the scent of one or other contractor, Aughnadhrin was in a highly excited state of mind. At the end of six weeks things quieted down to their normal state, for the

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committee had successfully laid the toils for Corney Clery, a third-rate mason, who now contracted to do the job for the full forty-five pounds—thirty pounds to be paid in instalments as the work proceeded, and the balance—or, as Corney would persist in terming it, the “‘baliance,’ as soon after as convenient”; this last elastic clause, the ingenious production of Peter Darragh, being the salt which was put on poor Corney's tail.

Anyhow, Corney had started the new market-house within a week after, and putting on it two masons along with himself, ran it up with much speed. Weekly bulletins in the Dhrimstevlin *Universe*, recording the progress made, kept the eager outside world *au courant* meanwhile; as for the Aughnadhrin world, it stood around Corney, in its shirt sleeves, and carefully watched every stone that was laid. And when at length it was completed, and duly opened with a scene of great jubilation and of much speechmaking, in which the Aughnadhrin of that day was compared with the Aughnadhrin of a quarter of a century

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before—very much to the disadvantage of the latter—and roseate pictures drawn of the Aughnadhrin which still lay in the womb of the future—some of the more emotional orators being carried so far past themselves by the uncontrollable enthusiasm of the occasion as to predict that some now listening might yet live to see a pig fair and a flax-market “flourishing and surging”—these were Peter Darragh’s words—“around this spacious, handsome, and noble edifice.” Corney Clery would have been the hero of the occasion, only that, at an early stage of the proceedings, he succumbed to the enraptured approbations of Aughnadhrin meted out to him in liquid form, and was sleeping the sleep of the happy what time the rafters of the market-house dinled to the thunder-claps of applause which the mention of his named evoked. But it was in the subsequent issue of the *Universe* that praise of “the respected and capable architect and contractor, Mr. Cornelius O’Clery,” was wrought to its highest pitch. Here, in a three-column article on the new market-

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house, tracing the history of the project from conception to completion, and awarding due share of credit to Rev. Thomas O'Rourke, P.P., V.G., Peter Darragh, Esq., and Messrs. Michael O'Gara and Manis Loughrey, and the industrious and enterprising citizens of Aughnadhrin (making special complimentary reference to those who advertised in the *Universe*), there was given a detailed biographical notice of Corney, who was shown to be a direct descendant of "the famous Goban-tsaoir, who built those lasting national monuments, the Round Towers of Ireland," incidentally mentioning that "the learned and indefatigable Michael O'Clery, the chief compiler of that marvellous and stupendous work, the wonder alike of his own age and of this our enlightened nineteenth century, 'The Annals of Ireland,' and who flourished three hundred years before, had the honour to belong to the same branch of the ancient and illustrious O'Clery family that has produced our contemporary, of whom we are all so creditably vain — Mr. Cornelius O'Clery."



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There were forty-one copies of the *Dhrimstevlin Universe* sent to Aughnadhrin by special carrier on Friday afternoon; yet when Johnnie the Joker's little son, Phaudien, from Mullinacroish, came in for a copy on Sunday morning, there was n't a single one to be got for love, money, or duck-eggs.

During those exciting days, Corney had neither time nor inclination to bother about that "baliance" which was to be paid, in terms of the contract, "as soon as convenient." But in the course of a few weeks, the enthusiasm naturally cooling and the rhetoric of the *Universe* beginning to be forgotten, Corney found himself gradually subsiding to his usual level in the social scale of Aughnadhrin, and the hard facts of existence again asserting themselves, and so it dawned upon him that he stood very much in need of his "baliance."

To Father Tom, then, he went, to prefer his request; and Father Tom referred him to Manis Loughrey, who referred him to Michael O'Gara, who referred him to Peter Darragh, who told Corney that it

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was n't yet convenient to pay him his "baliance," and that he must wait till the receipt of market tolls (which were now sure, Peter said, to flow into the committee's exchequer at a phenomenal rate) would place them in a position to square with him. But as Corney had, during the weeks of the excitement, been living quite rapidly, he was particularly low in funds, and the live-horse-and-you'll-get-oats theory did n't recommend itself to him. So day after day, then, Corney tramped the weary round of the committee, soliciting, wheedling, and threatening, but all to no purpose. The contract said (they pointed out to him) the balance was to be paid "as soon as convenient"; it was n't yet convenient, and he must abide by the contract. In the course of a few months they would, in all probability, discharge the debt. Corney thereupon went around the town storming at the attitude of the committee, and to every person he met relieving his mind of very forcible language on the subject. Corney's "baliance," then, about which he was crying out day

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and daily, became the great joke in Anghnadhryn; and whenever Corney was met, and by whomsoever encountered, the first question invariably was: "Well, Corney, have ye got yer 'baliance' yet?" And for three good weeks Anghnadhryn had to hold its sides every time the rare joke about Corney Clery's "baliance" cropped up; and as it cropped up, on the average, some hundreds of times per diem, it may well be guessed that Anghnadhryn's ticklesome sides were aching sorely.

The question was asked Corney for the last time on a Saturday night about this period. It was at Morris Maloney's bar. Corney had lounged in, in his usual listless fashion, and ordered a pint of porter, which Grace Anne was serving to him. One of a group of five or six townsmen, who had turned in to drink good luck to a new horse beast Micky Dunnien had just bought, observing Corney, promptly seized the opportunity to give his fellows a free laugh, so he said: "Hilloa, Corney Clery! is that you? Corney, any word of yer 'baliance' yet?"

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All laughed heartily.

"Well," Corney said, in his usual slow fashion, "I have n't got the 'baliance' yet, exactly."

There was another hilarious outburst at the foolish hopefulness of poor Corney's *exactly*.

"But," he went on, when the laugh was over, "I 've got the committee, an' they 're worth the 'baliance' any day."

"What!"

Corney was taking a long and refreshing shlug out of his pint, and when he had finished he wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, and, for the information of the astonished ones, repeated in the same casual fashion that he "had got the committee, and held them for the 'baliance.'"

"Where? How, Corney? Where have ye got them?"

"Och, I 've got them in the market-house. I tuk them down to show them somethin' I was goin' to remedy inside; an' when I had them in—Father Tom an' the other three—I av coorse turned the kay upon them." Here Corney exhibited

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a large key, which he fished up out of one of his pockets. His auditors gazed, open-mouthed, at the circumstantial evidence. "I 'll hould them there," Corney said, "till they pay me my ' baliance'; I 'll let them go then." Corney added this last clause in the tone of one who was making a generous and unexpected concession.

Corney's audience waited not any longer. It dashed out, and sped down the street toward the square. Corney sauntered after.

When the square was reached the crowd had swelled prodigiously. There were many noises emanating from the new market-house. The door was getting a mighty thumping from inside, and just then a skylight was burst open and, by the light of the moon, Peter Darragh's bald head was seen protruding.

"Where 's that scoundhril, Clery?" Peter shouted, in a voice husky with passion. "Where 's the scoundhril? Get him to open the doore an' let out his reverence an' the committee, an' be quick about it, or he 'll be d—d sorry for it!"

## Corney Clery's Balance.

The door, too, was still being thumped, and the barred windows rattled at. Never before was garrison half so eager to evacuate a stronghold.

"Tell his raverence he 'll get out, and yous 'll get out, when yez pay me over me 'baliance,'" Corney said, from the outskirts of the crowd.

The crowd did not like to laugh aloud, lest Father Tom should hear them, and they knew he must be enraged enough just then. The restraint they exercised was amazing.

"Tell Corney Clery I want him," Father Tom shouted through the keyhole.

Corney was led forward.

"Well, yer raverence, what might ye be afther wantin' with me?" Corney inquired.

"Open the door instantly, Corney Clery!"

"I 'll open the doore, yer raverence, the minnit I 'm paid down me 'baliance.'"

"Open the door, Corney Clery!"

"Gi' me me 'baliance,' Father Tom."

"Oh, oh! a nice way, this, for you, Corney Clery, to handle your priest."

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

"An' a nice way, this (be the laive o' yer coat), for you, Father Tom, to han'le yer contrhactor."

"Corney Clery, I'll make ye feel the weight o' my staff."

"Father Tom, I'm afeerd ye're on the wrong side o' the doore for that."

"Upon my solemn word, Clery, when I get out of this I'll make you hop to a tune ye did n't call for."

"Ay—*when* ye get out, yer raverence! When the sky falls, too, we'll all catch larks."

"Will you, sir, or will you not, open the door?"

"Yis, Father Tom, I'll open the door—sartintly—the minnit me 'baliance' is ped down ti me."

"What—ye villain! is it to keep the parish priest of Aughnadhrin forcibly imprisoned here, ye would?"

"Ay, it is—or if ye wor parish bishop either, or primate iv Armagh, ye'll not get out i' there till I get my 'baliance.'"

"Corney Clery, take you my word for it *that when* I'm free I'll lose little time

## Corney Clery's Balance.

making up for all the thrashin's your mother forgot to give you."

"But when you 're free, yer raverence, I 'll have me 'baliance' in me pocket, an' then I 'll not feel yer thrashin.'"

"Don't you forget, Clery; I 'll owe ye for this."

"Throth an', Father Tom, if ye be as bad pay about that as ye war about the conthraectin', I 'll not grudge ye ti owe me twicet as much i' the same sort."

In despair, Father Tom had to give Corney up. And then Peter Darragh began at him from the skylight; but, in answering Peter, Corney put much less restraint upon his tongue, with the result that, after a ten-minutes' sharp passage at arms, which was boisterously enjoyed by the multitude, poor Peter withdrew his bald head, covered with insult, ignominy, and defeat.

A council of war was then held within. The garrison agreed to capitulate, and Peter Darragh conveyed the intelligence to Corney through the keyhole. By Peter's request, a messenger was despatched to



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

tell Mrs. Darragh to come with all possible haste, and fetch the bank with her.

Mrs. Darragh, in a state of great mental distress, quickly arrived on the scene, the bank with her, as requested (which bank was an ancient stocking of her mother's), out of which she counted down into Corney's horny (and not virgin-white) palm fifteen gold sovereigns—the amount in full of his “baliance”—got possession of the key, and restored to the world again, and to freedom, four irate men—that public-spirited group which rejoiced in the proud title of the Aughnadhrin Town Improvement Committee.

The assembled townspeople itched to give them a welcoming cheer, but, observing the business-like grip in which Father Tom held his staff, they concluded to repress their enthusiasm. Perhaps it was as well.

**THE STAFF OF THE  
“UNIVERSE”**



## THE STAFF OF THE "UNIVERSE."

PAT MORONEY was the Editor; the Staff was Denis Reid.

It happened in the troublous days of the Land League, when editors had ever to be prepared, knowing not when, like a thief in the night, the arm of Coercion would come upon them, lifting them from out the editorial chair and thrusting them into a dungeon.

Dhrimstevlin was a troubled place in those troublous days, and the Dhrimstevlin *Universe*, coming out every Friday morning smelling of powder, sold like hot cakes. For a fearless man occupied the editorial chair, and alike the spineless one, the backslider, and the landgrabber wriggled weekly on the point of his pen, to the nervous horror of the few and the exultant admiration of the many. Pat Moroney made the *Universe* and the Dhrimstevlin world ring with his thundering denunciations of the

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

mean man, the dishonest, and the unpatriotic one, and not even the biggest of your big London dailies ever sounded the tocsin in the hour of alarm as loudly, as peremptorily, as did the *Universe*, nor was any of them ever so gladly, so promptly, so unquestioningly obeyed; and, certes, none of your editors ever received a tithe of the idolatrous worship which—barring an uncertain weekly turnover of from twenty-five to thirty shillings—was the gratifying reward of Pat Moroney's sterling services to his country.

Pat always referred to his chief (and only) reporter, Denis, as "the Staff." The Staff luxuriated on an income of thirteen-and-sixpence per week, and had a genius for drinking. Its normal state was half-drunken; but whenever there was a special rush of work on, such as might be caused by the sudden descent of the Bearded Lady on Dhrimstevlin, or the birth of a five-legged calf in the Aughermore parish, or the rumour of Neil Managhan having dug full-grown tubers while yet it was June, Pat, to his intense vexa-

## The Staff of the "Universe."

tion, was sure to find the Staff gloriously drunk and incapable, so that, with the undelivered half of an eloquent leader still surging in his soul, Pat had to throw on his going-out coat and rush for "copy." And poor Pat's only consolation was that Denis provided him with a few capital jokes, which never seemed to grow old. "Yes," poor Pat would say, when sympathised with in his affliction, "my *Staff* is a broken Reid." Pat considerably gave you time to laugh off the effects of this one before he overwhelmed you with the next: "Denis was *broke* when he come to me, and he has remained *broke* ever since, though I have done my seventy endeavours with him to try *splicin'*, an' see if that would n't mend him." Though, if Denis was by on such occasion, he was wont to insinuate the retort witty: "I believe it's the slendherness of my salary that's the cause of my downfall; if I had a stouter one to lean against, I could manage to keep straight." If Denis had vouchsafed a laugh to his editor's joke, the editor, in turn, graciously acknowledged that of the

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

Staff. He often told the Staff that he 'd dismiss him, only said Staff was so much in his debt that he could n't afford it. And to make his tenure still more secure, Denis lost no opportunity of getting deeper into his editor's books. But a stronger objection (in Pat's eye, though he never told it) to the dismissal of the Staff was, that a joke which had cost much laborious effort to perfect would thenceforth remain with him a white elephant.

Now Denis had been a long time drinking on the *Universe*. (This, by the way, was Pat's third and last, and I think best, good joke at the Staff's expense. The coming of Denis was the epoch from which Pat dated and antedated all other less important events. "I say, Reid," Pat would say, when he was trying to place some event of modern Irish history, "when 's this you commenced dhrinkin' on the *Universe*?"") Denis, we said, had now been a long time drinking on the *Universe*, and his life was gradually acquiring a fabulous value (from a lender's point of view) to his *editor*, when that tide of which the poet

## The Staff of the "Universe."

wrote long time ago suddenly seemed to set in in the affairs of Denis, and Denis, prompt to act on the poet's advice, seized it, ardently expectant that he would ride on top of it to fortune.

'Twas thus. For some article more fierce and fiery than usual, which her Majesty's Privy Council deemed highly dangerous to the peace of the realm and Dhrimstevlin, Pat Moroney was suddenly pounced upon by a gang of policemen and hurriedly conveyed to the security of the jail, the gate of which was, not an instant too soon, slammed in the face of hastily trooping, enraged townsmen. Finding, then, that Dhrimstevlin's esteem of the gallant Pat could not be shown in any more self-satisfying manner, before night fell, a fund had, on the suggestion of Rody Cooney, been started, and £50 already subscribed by enthusiastic fellow-citizens—with every likelihood of its reaching double that amount before a week's time—as a testimonial to be presented to Pat when the heavy gates would, some months hence, swing back to give him to the world,



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

and his worshippers again. And the whole Dhrimstevlin world organised itself into a committee to receive Pat on his release, present him with the testimonial, and give him such a welcome as would at once warm poor Pat's heart and make the Government of the day shake in its shoes. And hereupon a glorious prospect arose before the eyes of the Staff. Denis was now, and whilst his editor remained in confinement, the Atlas who must bear upon his shoulders the responsibility of a *Universe*. For too long he had, somehow or other, been considered rather a nonentity in the political life of Dhrimstevlin, his talents and his services overshadowed, and his personality swallowed up by the looming figure of his chief. And now, Denis bethought him, it would be a very tempting of Providence if he allowed to escape him such a magnificent opportunity of compelling the Land Leaguers of Dhrimstevlin to appraise him at his proper value—the which was shortly and simply to be accomplished by a few leading articles that would make the British Constitution

## The Staff of the "Universe."

totter to its foundation—speedily earning for their writer the admiration of Dhrimstevlin, jail, a demonstration on his emerging again, and—principal thing—a testimonial! A couple of months' hack-work on the *Universe* would n't mean, at the utmost, more than half-a-dozen beggarly pounds, with his chances, of course, at the pub.; whereas, a couple of months such ease in prison as he sorely needed to recuperate nerves that had been suffering from overstrain in days when a man did n't know what minute he would be required to pronounce upon the momentous question whether he 'd have his hot or with soda, would fetch him, of a certainty, tenfold that amount, probably even more—not to mention the prospect of public (house) privileges which his increase in popularity would place at his disposal. It was, in fact, the opportunity of his life, and Denis determined that it should not be wasted. The clang of the jail-gates behind his chief had scarcely ceased resounding when a *Universe* Special was falling like snow-flakes upon the excited citizens of Dhrimstevlin.

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

and, within the limits of its fourteen square inches, they had dished up to them more sedition than would serve to hang half a county. When the Special had been showered upon the startled public, the Staff composed itself, with the aid of a noggin of whiskey, to await the coming of the authorities, with the handcuffs. But, though he waited long, no more tyrannical authority appeared than old Maura McCauley (who had nineteen shillings a-year for tidying things), who peremptorily ordered Denis to take down his feet off the mantelpiece or she 'd make smithereens of him with the tongs—an order which he did n't pause to dispute. The ordinary weekly issue of the *Universe*, coming out some days after, though it contained much that was certainly *new*, had very little of what may be properly called *news*—for Denis wanted elbow-room to lay about him, which he did all over the face of the paper. There was n't a British official, from the Queen down to Micky Meenan the process-server, that he did n't haul and maul up and down the columns; and there

## The Staff of the "Universe."

was n't an article of the Constitution which lends itself to breaking in print that Denis did n't smash into indivisible atoms. Still the authorities displayed a criminal disregard of their duty. For a second week, and a third, Denis continued his onslaught upon the laws and lawmakers of the realm, flanking it with incitements to violence and lessons upon the latest and best methods of law-breaking; but, to his intense and just indignation, Denis found himself still compelled to walk about a free man.

That the authorities had vilely conspired to deny him the privileges of the law, was evident. Denis, driven to this conclusion, aroused him then and went out, determined to burst up the conspiracy, or die in the attempt. The third man he met was Micky Meenan. Micky, being the process-server, and so a minion of the Government, would answer his purposes as well as if he had been the Lord Chancellor. So Denis marched up to Micky and promptly knocked him down. There was absolutely no loophole of escape for the authorities this time, as two policemen were looking

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

on. They seized upon him at once, and marched the now triumphant Denis to the barrack. A special court sat upon him; to the joy of his heart, he was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment, and in less than one hour from the assault he had the exquisite pleasure of hearing the big jail gates clang musically behind him.

Inside the jail walls, as outside, Denis soon discovered hard labour was hard. And it is probable he would have been actually discontented—to put the feeling in its mildest form—with his lot had not the joys of anticipation tempered the inconvenience of jail life and the crudeness of jail diet. Denis was blessed with that very vivid imagination said to be characteristic of our race, and he whiled away much of the time pleasantly rehearsing for his release—conceiving the drift of the address, preparing his answer, listening to the huzzas, observing the surging crowd, hearing the crashing of the bands, and, sweetest scene of all, hurrying to his own private apartments, on Kitty Scanlan's garret, and reckoning the yellow contents of the purse,

## The Staff of the "Universe."

When, then, on the morning of his liberation, Denis stepped from the prison gates, on his features the carefully practised smile of joy with which he was to acknowledge the huzzas of the multitude, he was cruelly staggered to find not a solitary sinner awaiting him! The bewildered Denis looked up the street and looked down the street, but, to his unmitigated disgust, the surging crowd was n't coming! Ah! they had miscalculated the day of his release. That was it. He must himself be the bearer of the joyous tidings to them; he 'd off to Rody Cooney at once, till Rody would raise the town. Rody kept a grocery, not far from the jail. Denis, ere he rushed into Rody's, paused just a moment to screw up his effusiveness to its highest pressure, and next moment burst in upon him with a wild hurrah! and with both hands extended for Rody's glad and eager grasp. Now, Rody Cooney, be it noted, was a very dry humorist. When Denis burst in upon Rody, he was in the act of cutting off a ha-porth of tobacco for Briany Mullen's young son, Jimmy, who had taken to

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

chewing. Rody held the knife in suspension while he glanced up. "Hello, Denis Reid," he said, "how are ye?" and then calmly cut and papered up Jimmy Mullen's consignment of merchandise, whilst poor Denis, feeling like a suddenly deflated bladder, leant up against a post and gasped. "Reid," said Rody, when he had disposed of his customer, "where have ye been this long time? I don't think I laid me eyes on ye these ten days."

This took the breath from poor Denis completely—so he gasped several times before he could reply, "Why, I 've been in jail for six weeks!"

"*In-jail!* Whew-w-w-w! An' for six weeks!—Now, Reid," and his tone became one of friendly reprimand, "I knew it would come to this with ye yet."

Denis stared blankly at him.

"I 'll tell ye what it is, Denis Reid, as a frien', ye 've better pick yerself up. This should be a lesson to ye, an' I hope you 'll profit by it, an' that I won't see thrace or thrack of dhrink on ye for the time to *come*."

## ' The Staff of the "Universe."

"Rody Cooney," said Denis, with the courage of indignation and desperation, "*I was n't in jail for dhrink! It was for levellin' a process-sarver.*"

"Oh-h-h!" Rody said, "so you 're right. Knockin' down poor oul' Micky Meenan. Someone was tellin' me the affair the other day, I mind now—an' I took your excuse, an' sayed only ye were dhrunk ye would n't do it."

Denis, with disgust surging in his bosom, turned and made for the door.

"But, I say, Denis," Rody stopped him, "if Moroney 's for kickin' up a row over the business when ye go up to the office, count on me to do what I can to smooth matters. Only—ye must stick to it that ye were dead dhrunk at the time an' did n't know what ye were doin'." The enraged Denis was off. "Mind," Rody called after him from the door, "mind, Denis Reid, ye have always a frien' in me."

But with tossing head, and bosom burning with just indignation, the Staff was striding hastily and aggressively up the main street of cold Dhrimstevlin.





**THE CADGER-BOY'S LAST  
JOURNEY**



## THE CADGER-BOY'S LAST JOURNEY.<sup>1</sup>

HIS poor mother, after blessing herself with the little brass cross upon her beads, arose from her knees and took again her customary seat by Hughie's bedside. Hughie, who had been lying in a state of obliviousness rather than asleep, had his faculties recalled even by the very little noise his mother's motion made. Her gaze was bent upon her lap, where her hands, still holding the beads, lay limply. For several minutes Hughie watched her, noting the weary and worn look which had asserted itself on her features.

"Mother!" Hughie said at length.

His mother started. "Hughie, *a leanbh*,<sup>2</sup> sure I thought it was sleepin' ye were. What is it ye want, *a theagair*? "<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1899, by the Outlook Company. All rights reserved.

<sup>2</sup> My child, pron. *à lannio*.

<sup>3</sup> My treasure, pron. *à haigur*.

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

"Mother, what time is it in the night?"

"It 's atween an hour an two hours afther midnight, son."

"Mother," Hughie said, "the heart o' ye is bruck with this weary sittin' up with me every night——"

"Arrah, Hughie, Hughie!" his mother said upbraidingly, "what is it ye 're sayin'? Whisht with ye, for God's sake!"

"Och, I know it, mother—I know it. If ye had n't a holy saint's patience, an' God's helpin' han', ye 'd 'a' given in long ago."

"What 's come over ye, Hughie, to be givin' such nonsense out of ye? Sure, it 's not want to put pain on me ye do, is it?"

"What day i' the week 's this, tell me, mother?"

"This? It 's Friday night."

"Friday night. An' it was on a Monday evenin' I lay down. Mother, was it nine weeks or ten last Monday evenin'? I 'm beginnin' to lose count i' the weeks lately meself."

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

"Och, I don't know, Hughie. Sure, that 's all God's will, dear."

"I know it 's God's will, mother—an' God's will be done. I b'leeve it 's ten weeks; an' if it was His will that it should be ten times ten weeks, *I* could bear the sickness. But then, the sickness i' the body is nothin'—nothin' at all—to the soreness i' the heart. An' it 's *you* has to bear that. That 's what puts worst on me, mother dear."

"Do ye want to put pain on me Hughie?"

"Och, mother, don't be talkin' that way. Sure I know, an' I can't help knowin' the pains on ye. Ye 're as brave a mother—there 's no denyin'—as ever was; but let the bravest i' them come through all you come through for the ten weeks gone, an' suffer all you suffered, an' never for all that time sthretch themselves six times upon a bed—let the bravest i' the mothers do that, an' see what heart they 'll have at the end of it."

"Och, Hughie, Hughie, *a mhic!*<sup>1</sup> I

<sup>1</sup> My son.

## The Bewitched Fiddl

can't stand ye at all, at all. You mane to br'ak me patience now, at any rate."

"No, mother, I don't. But if I did n't say much all the time I 've been lyin' on me back here, I was thinkin'—thinkin' a great dale. An' when I go, mother—och, don't mother! Mother, dear, don't go for to cry lake that or ye 'll throuble me sore! Sure ye know yerself I must go. Did n't Father Mick tell us both it was God's will, an' be reconciled to it? An' did n't you yourself give in that ye were reconciled to it? An' surely I have a good right to be if you are. Mother, when I go I 'll have with me the knowledge of the brave woman ye were, an' of all ye sthrove with an' suffered, an' of how ye did yer seven bests to let no wan see the troubles the heart of ye was comin' through. I 'll carry that knowledge to heaven with me, mother dear."

His mother could not answer him, for she was striving hard with the tide of grief which swelled in her bosom and struggled for outlet.

Little Hughie was, to-night, possessed by an exceptionally talkative mood.

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

"If ye sthruggle on, with God's help, mother, for another year, wee Donal, he 'll be able an' sthrong an' wise enough then to go on the road."

Little Donal was then lying at Hughie's back, between him and the wall, and sleeping peacefully.

"Wee Donal 'll then be able to take the road with the powny an' cart; an' wee Donal 'll be as good a son, an' betther, to ye, mother, than ever I was. Though, I never kep' any money I could help, mother, barrin' (as I toul' ye the other night—an' as I confessed to Father Mick)—barrin' three ha'pence for tibacky, days I got good sale for the fish. But I could n't do without the tibacky, mother, wanst I give myself the bad habit. Och, mother, if you would only know lonely nights that I 'd be thravellin' *dhreich*<sup>1</sup> an' lonely roads, an' me, too, hungrier than I 'd wish—if you would only know the comfort an' the company the tibacky was to me, I knew ye 'd forgive me, keepin' an odd wee three ha'-pence for it. Now would n't ye, mother?"

<sup>1</sup> Tedious.



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

"Och, Hughie! Och, Hughie!"

"I just knew the kindly heart i' ye could n't do else than forgive me. But I know, too, I should have always axed yer laive afore I started out on me journey—axed yer laive to let me buy the tibacky for me-self. But ye always were so dead again' us smokin' that I was always the coward to ax ye.

"An', ay, many's the long an' many's the *dhreich* journey, mother, me an' the powny had with our wee cart i' fish. An', thank God, many's the pleasant journey, too—far, far more of that sort than of the *dhreich* wans. I mind me many's the lovely moonlight night when we thravelled along the white mountain road goin' through to Pettigo, or goin' up to Ennis-killen an' to Cavan. An' where there 'd be miles an' miles of that road through the Pettigo mountains where there was n't a house or a house, or you would n't meet a sinner in broad day, let alone i' the night, I used not to have wan bit fear, mother. You always shook the holy wather on me when I had me cap lifted, blissin' meself

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

afore I left the doore without; an' then, when that time i' night come that I thought you was sayin' the Rosary here at home, an' I 'd have got on me good lonely part i' the road, I 'd take me cap in me han' an' I 'd say me own wee prayers as me an' the powny jogged on, an' afther that I 'd know no fear, no matther how-somiver lonesome it might be. An', och, mother, the lonesomeness, in the middle i' the mountains on a clear moonlight night, had somethin' gran' about it."

"Hughie, *a thaisge*,<sup>1</sup> I hope ye 're not disthressin' yerself talkin'," his mother said, laying a gentle hand on his forehead.

"Oh no, mother! Oh no, mother! It does me good to think over them things now, an' have you listenin' to me. But then, mother dear, maybe it 's too tired to listen ye are?"

"Oh no, Hughie; no, Hughie *a mhic*. Tell on—I 'd never be tired listenin' to ye."

"Thanky, mother. Och, mother, many an' many 's the beautiful journey I had

<sup>1</sup> My store.

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

with me wee cart i' fish, if I only begun to tell ye them, settin' off here afore night-fall, an' thravellin' all night, an' bein' in Sthrabane market or maybe Enniskillen market next day, an' sellin' out me wee load, an' maybe clearin' ten or twelve or maybe sometimes fifteen shillin's, an' then, afther a good rest an' a good harty male, not forgettin' poor Johnnie, startin' on thravellin' back for home the nixt night again, with me gains in me pocket—as happy as the son of a prence; an' havin' an odd wee sleep in the bed i' the cart, too."

"Och, Hughie, it was gran' surely, an' no mistake."

"Ah, *gran* was no name for it, mother! An' then, too, at the boats—when they came in, the men always give me such bargains, bekase of whose son I was."

"They did, *a mhic*. They did, Hughie, *a thaisge*. God bliss them, an' reward them."

"God bliss them over again, an' reward them, mother. They could n't be kinder to me. An' I often thought it was betther,

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

afther all, that ye would n't let me join a boat meself, mother."

"No, no, Hughie, a *gradh*! No, I would n't. Not afther yer poor father, a *gradh*! No, no! God rest him!"

"God rest him, mother! God rest him! An' small wondher you would n't let wan belongin' to ye go upon the sae again. It 's a cruel, thracherous sea, mother, God knows! Mother dear, don't cry. What 's done can't be undone."

"Ay, ay, Hughie. Ay, a cruel, thracherous sae. But, for all that, we can't say much about it, Hughie—we can't say much about it. Where would we, an' where would all our neighbours be, but for it?"

"That 's right, mother. That 's right. That 's what I 've always sayed when I heerd them complainin' again' it, that, like you, lost their nearest an' dearest be it. It 's ill our comin' to say a hard word again' the sae. Mother, open the doore."

"For what, a *leanbh*? Are you too warm, a *paisdin*?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It ill becomes us.

<sup>2</sup> My little boy.

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

"No; but I want to see the sea, an' to hear it. There 's a moon, is n't there?"

"Yis, Hughie dear; there 's a moon, an' a bright wan, thank God," his mother said, going to the door and opening it wide.

"Mother, are ye too tired to rise me up a wee thrifle in the bed, an' let me head rest in yer lap, till I see out?"

"Tired? No, no, Hughie. No, no. Aisy, *a mhic*—gently now. Don't sthress yerself, *a paisdin mhilis*. There now, there now, lay yer head there. Now can ye see the sae away below thonder [yonder]?"

"Yis, yis, mother, thank God! I see it—I see it! The yalla moonlight baitin' down on it has it like flowin' goold. Oh, mother, it 's beautiful!"

"It is beautiful, *a theagair*—beautiful!"

The Widow Cannon's house was far up on the Ardaghey hillside, and the sea out at Inver bar and beyond was plainly visible through the door from the corner in which *was* placed Hughie's bed. A muffled mu-

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

sic, too, could be heard ascending from the bar.

Hughie lay quietly gazing, gazing.

After a while two yawls were plainly seen far out darting athwart the yellow path which the moon laid along the waters.

"The boats," Hughie said, "are aff,<sup>1</sup> mother, the night."

"Yis, Hughie; they 're aff."

Then Hughie again relapsed into silence, watching and thinking. A smile of sweet content, his mother saw with gladness, gradually grew upon his countenance and played about his glistening eyes. And presently, to the sweet murmur of the bar, his eyes closed, and he slept.

The Widow Cannon stirred not one little bit, lest she should disturb the poor boy's slumber—his first for many days and nights. But her lips began to move again in prayer, and a disengaged hand to tell the beads. Occasionally her eyes were turned up to heaven, but mostly they rested upon the now placid, smiling countenance of her poor boy, who slept on.

<sup>1</sup> Off; i.e., at the fishing grounds.

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

"Mother?"

"Yis, *a mhilis*?<sup>1</sup> Is it awake ye are?"

"Why, was it sleepin' I was, mother dear?"

"Ay, sleepin', *a mhic dhilis*. A sweet sleep."

"There ye are—an' I thinkin' I went through it all."

"What, darlin'? Was it dhraimin' ye were?"

"Ay, dhraimin' I suppose it must 'a' been. But I thought—mother!"

"What is it now, *a mhic*?"

"Who 's callin'?"

"I hear no wan callin', Hughie dear."

"Listen! Don't ye hear? Hear to that! Who 's that? What 's that?"

"That? Oh, that 's the bar, Hughie dear—that 's only the bar ye hear."

"Is it the bar? Well, mother, as I was sayin', I thought I had got up an' fed Johnnie, an' then pulled out the rakin's i' the fire, an' made myself a dhrop i' tay in the porringer, an' then harnesshed Johnnie, an' yocked him, an' away with the

<sup>1</sup> My sweet.

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

both of us away to the sthran', to see if the boats was in. An' when we got to the sthran' there was n't a boat in yet, nor there was n't a cadger come upon the sthran' with powny or donkey. An' then I saw it was the moon was shinin' bright upon the wathers, makin' it look near like day. There was the big white sthran' sthretchin' from me to the right an' to the left, with niver another sowl on it but meself an' Johnnie, the powny. An' the In-ver Warren over beyont me; an' the Fana-ghan banks risin' up black behin' me; an' the full tide washin' in an' br'akin' in wee ripples that had a dhreamy, sing-song sound at me feet. An' then, far, far away, away out on the wather, I could see the yawls an' the boats hard at the fishin'. An' all at wanst, mother, while I was lookin', what does I see but wan particular boat comin' glidin' in swift, sthstraight along the sort of yalla river that the moon made from where the wathers an' the skies met, right up to my feet; in along this goolden river I sees the boat comin' faster an' faster, far faster than any of the boats ever does.



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

an' it was comin' rowin' right up towards where I was. I seen there was a lady all in white in the bow i' the boat, an' when it come near she was standin' up an' callin' me with her finger. An' she looked iver such a beautiful lady, mother, when they come nearer still. An' when they did come nearer, into within wadin' distance, an' they turned the boat roun' so that they faced me, an' shipped their oars, I knew every wan was in the boat. An', mother dear, who was it but me father was at the helm! me father himself! An' James an' Pathrick Magroarty was on the afther oars! an' Feargal McCue on the second bow! Just the very four, mother, that went down in me father's boat. An' Micky Dinnien, that got saved, his oar it was lyin' along the thafts with no wan to pull it!

"But the most curious part of the thing, mother, was that I was n't wan bit surprised to see them. Lookin' at them there, I knew right well—minded right well—that they were dhrowned; but, all the same, I somehow thought they were

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

still alive—ye know, mother, how dhraims does go that way?"

"Yis, Hughie; yis, Hughie. O God rest their souls, Hughie!"

"God rest them, mother. Well, as I sayed, when the boat come as far as to be near groundin', they swung her round, be Feargal McCue *shewin'* on his oar. An' then me father, he rises from the helm, an' he says, 'Hughie,' says he, 'we 're short of a han' since we lost Micky Dinnien' (him was saved, mind you, mother) —'short of a han', ' says he, 'since we lost Micky Dinnien, an''—mother, do ye hear?"

"What! what! *a stoir mo chroidhe*?<sup>1</sup> What is it?"

"Who 's that callin', mother? Listen! Now—hear it now!"

"Hughie, Hughie, *a thaisge*, that 's the bar ye hear again. The noise is risin' an' fallin', as ye know it always does. That 's the bar, *a paisdin*."

"Is it the bar, mother? It sounds to me very like some wan callin'—very. Well,

<sup>1</sup> Store of my heart.

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

mother, as I was tellin' ye, me father he says, ' We 're short of a han' since we lost Micky Dinnien, and we can come but poor speed on the fishin' grounds. We seen you, Hughie, come down with the powny to the sthran', an' we rowed in, to take ye aboard. Will ye step in like a good chile, Hughie, and pull on the bow oar for us?' But I minded, mother, how you promised, an' made me promise, I'd never take to the fishin' afther what happened; so I had to refuse him. ' Father,' says I, ' I'd like to do as ye ax me, an' take the bow oar, but I can't—I can't. Ye knows,' says I, ' how me poor mother 's so dead again' my ever goin' in wan i' the boats; and ye know her poor oul' heart it 's nigh bruck already; an' I 'll never have it sayed that I was the manes of br'akin' it out an' out.' ' An' God bliss ye, me son, for mindin' yer poor mother's wishes so,' says me father back again. An' with that, mother, who should appear but yourself up on the bank above me, an' ye called down to me: ' Go with yer father, Hughie—go with yer poor father.' I was ever so

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

glad when I got your laive to go, for I was burning to go. I threw me arms roun' Johnnie's neck, an' I called to ye, 'Mother, come you down an' take Johnnie home, an' don't forget him while me an' me father's aff.' The white lady she was standin' up in the bow of the boat now, and she was wavin' her hands to me to come. 'Come, Hughie,' she calls; 'come, wee Hughie! the tide's laivin', and we 'll get sthranded when we should be on the fishin' grounds.' I waded into the wather immediately an' out to the boat—an' I was just almost beside the boat—within a step of it or two, an' the beautiful white lady had her hands sthretched out, to give me a help in over the bows, an' I was sthretchin' out my hands tor'st her, when there 's comes a smooth swell that shook an' staggered me where I stood, an' I thought I 'd 'a' fallen backwards—but the white lady at that sthretched out further to help me, when I wakened!

"Mother, was n't that or not a wondherful dhraim?"

"Yis; wondherful it was, Hughie —

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

mighty wondherful, me poor fella. It was a very sthrange, oncommon dhraim. An' Micky Dinnien's oar, too, was idle! And they sayin' they 'd lost Micky!"

"That was the very thing, mother, I thought strangest of all."

"Hughie, we 'll say a Pather-an'-Avvy for the rest of yer father's sowl, an' the sowls of the crew."

"Yis, mother, do."

Then the widow slowly intoned the "Our Father," and Hughie took it up fervently at "Give us this day," and the widow poured forth her soul in the "Hail, Mary! full of grace," while poor, wasted, emaciated Hughie clasped his hands and with streaming eyes strenuously pleaded a "Holy Mary, Mother of God"; and both then chorused joyously a "*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.*"

"Mother," said Hughie, "I 'll sleep."

"Sleep then, *a chuisle mo chroidhe*,<sup>1</sup> sleep. Thank God," said his mother.

And ere she had finished the sentence

<sup>1</sup> Pulse of my heart.

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

Hughie's eyes had closed, and he was again asleep. She still held in her lap his head, as she had done now for upwards of two hours. She bent down and left a light kiss on his pale brow.

"Mother, is that you, there?"

"Yis, Hughie, a *leanbh*. Are ye aisy?"

"Mother, what are ye doin' there? Who's callin', mother?"

"I 'm only aisin' yer head, Hughie, holdin' it up—an' restin' meself sittin' here. There 's no wan callin', Hughie. That 's the bar, ye hear."

"Oh, but there 's some wan callin'—callin' me, mother. Listen to it!"  
Hughie's voice was very low.

"Hughie, a *mhilis*, no. It 's the bar. Sure yer own mother knows."

"Is it near mornin', mother? What time is it?"

"It 's near mornin', Hughie. The first sthreaks is on the sky."

"The first sthreaks on the sky, an' me lyin' here! an' the boats in! Mother, what day 's this? What 's come over me,

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

anyhow, that I 've lost the memory o' what day it is?"

"This is Monday morning', Hughie, *a thaisge*."

"An' the morra's market-day in Ennis-killen—is n't it, mother?"

"I suppose so, Hughie, I suppose so. But, *a thaisge*, don't, don't be disthressin' yerself about them things."

"Och, mother, mother, it 's not here I should be lyin' at this time in the mornin'—an' I havin' to go buy me load yet, an' be as far as Pettigo afore nightfall, an' be goin' up Enniskillen sthreet with the first light the morra mornin'. Mother, mother, let me up. Put me on a dhrop i' tay, an' butter me a bit of oat-cake, an' I 'll give a grain i' corn to poor Johnnie. Mother, why don't ye let me up, I say? The boats is in two hours ago. Look out. There is n't a sign i' wan of them on the wather!"

"Whisht, whisht! Oh, Hughie, *a thaisge*, whisht an' lie quiet. Don't ye know, *a gradh*, ye 're far through with the sickness? Oh, Hughie, *a paisdin*, whisht, *whisht* with ye!"

## The Cadger-Boy's Last Journey.

"Mother, I must be on the market pavement of Enniskillen this time the morra mornin'. Mother, why will ye hould me, an' you hearin' them callin'? Don't ye hear, mother? Don't ye hear? 'Hughie! Hughie! Hughie!' Don't ye hear them, mother?"

"Och, Hughie i' me heart, lie down quiet. Or what 's comin' over ye, Hughie? No, no, Hughie! ye must n't, ye can't go for to rise, *a leanbh!*"

"Hear to them, mother! Hear to them! 'Hughie! Hughie! Hughie!' Don't ye hear? Ay! ay! Och, call you from the doore for me, mother—call you, mother dear, for my voice 'll not let me call loud, whatever 's come on it. Call 'Ay!' mother, an' tell them I 'm comin' as soon as poor Johnnie's fed."

"Yis, Hughie, *a thaisge*, yis. If you lie quiet I 'll call to them."

"Mother, what do ye mane? Lie quiet! an' the boats in!—an' the light on the sky—an' me havin' to be goin' up Enniskillen sthreet this time the morra mornin', mother!—forty long mile, an' a tiresome jour-



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

ney for poor Johnnie. It 's a long journey, mother, but—I—must——”

His poor mother had to force Hughie back upon the bed. It did n't take much force, indeed. Then he became quiet, suddenly. The look of anxiety and unrest slowly passed from his features. His two hands closed in a faster clasp upon one hand of his mother, which in the struggle he had caught. A smile of sweet peace settled upon his white, wasted face, and the cadger-boy started upon his last journey.

**THE THREE MASTER  
TRADESMEN**



## THE THREE MASTER TRADESMEN.

THERE was once and there was king in Ireland, in the old, old times long ago, and he had three sons, who grew up to be fine fellows, a credit to the father and mother that reared them, and a credit to themselves. These three young men, or three princes, as we should call them, were very fond of sporting—hunting, fishing, and shooting, and such like—and so they used to be out and off almost every day, away in the woods and mountains, afther their sport whatever it might be; but lo, and behold ye! was n't there one day the' were off in the woods like this, and when that time of day come and the hunger took them, they sat down, and, piling up a big fire, roasted plenty of game, and with a good wash-down—that you may take your davy they never left their father's threshel without—made a fine hearty dinner; and

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

when they were restin' and chattin' afther it—"Ah!" says one of them suddenly, that way, says he, "but it 's me 'ill have the fine times of it entirely when our father's dead, an' all these woods 'ill be my own to do whatever I like with!"

The other two looked at him dumbfounded a bit for a while, an'—"Well, plague on ye for yer imperence," says both of them at once, "do ye imagine *you* 'll step into all when our father dies?" "I intend havin' these woods for meself," says one; and "I intend havin' these woods for meself," says the other.

And there it was, one word borrowed another, and from words the' soon fell to blows, and the three of them commenced malleyvoguין' each other, like all that ever was, about which of them would take their father's place when he 'd die. And the end of it was that they fetched themselves home to their father that night in such a plight that neither himself nor the queen would take one of them to be their son; they had so battered and ill-used each other out of all knowin'.

## The Three Master Tradesmen.

The three of them all at once commenced his own story to their father, and everyone of them would up by axin' would n't be be king next. But the father was too cute to give them an answer. On very next day they went off to the woods again afther their sport, an' when they had made a rousin' dinner, cooked by themselves, with a good wash-down as usual, the same lad that made the mischief the day afore stretches himself with a yawn, and—"Ah!" says he, "but it 's me 'ill have the gran' times of it intirely when these woods is all me own to do what I like with!" And "Plague on ye for yer imperence!" says one, and "Plague on ye for yer imperence!" says the other. "These woods 'ill fall to me," says one, and "These woods 'ill fall to me," says the other.

One word borrowed another this day again, and from words they came to blows, and they fell to it once more, malleyvoguain' each other till the' abused each other past knowin', and then they set out for home, and everyone of them laid his complaints in with the king this night, too; but still

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the king, bein' in a quandharry what to do, would give them no satisfaction.

So the third day again they set off again to the woods afther their usual sports as before, an', to make a long story short, the self-same contentious lad that done the harm the two first days stretches himself afther he had his fill of splendid dinners of roasted game, an' he says, "Oh!" says he, "but it 's me 'ill have the grand time of it intirely when these woods are me own!" And "Plague take yer imperence!" says one, "the woods 'ill all belong to me!" an' "Plague take the both of yer imperences!" says the other, "the woods 'ill all belong to me!" And there ye were again. To it they fell, an' if they malleyvogued each other bad the first two days, they made nothin' short of picthurs of themselves this day; till when they brought themselves home to the king and queen that night there was no knowin' them, good, bad, or indifferent; and the king and the queen both ups and they said that something would have to be done; and the *three princes* said the very same thing—

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that something would have to be done; an' they ordered the king to settle it there an' then, that very night, which of them he was goin' to laive king afther him.

But the king was very loath on the subject, an' he told them that if they 'd give him that night to think over it, he 'd tell them in the mornin' what he intended doin'. So that night they agreed to give him, and in the mornin' the king right enough sent for the three of them, and he says, says he: "Me sons, whichever of the three of you I give me kingdom to, the other two of you will as good as starve, for none of yous have a trade that yous could turn your hand to, an' it 's as plain as a whinstone quarry that whoever gets the kingdom will not bear the other two. I have been all night ruminatin' an' considerin' over this, an' I have come to the conclusion that the best thing to be done is to send the three of yous away for seven years to learn whatever trade each of yous choose. And then when on this day seven years each of yous come back, I 'll put yous to the test, and whichever of yous



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

is able to prove himself the cleverest and most finished mather tradesman, in whatever trade he has learnt, I 'll appoint him to be king in my stead."

Well, of course none of them could say against this, and the three of them that very day bid the king and queen good-by and set out together to travel away before them till they 'd find, each of them, a good workman who 'd teach them a trade. They travelled on and on before them, till, when it was getting on in the day, they come to a place where three roads branched off, and here, bidding each other good-by, and promising to meet and wait for one another at the same place on that day seven years, they parted, everyone of them taking his own road.

Everyone of them slept by the roadside with his bundle under his head that night, and they got up fresh the next morning, and went on their ways, lonely enough. But about noon that day the eldest brother, on the road he was, fell in with a man on horseback, who got into chat with *him* and asked him where he was going

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or what was he looking for. And he told the horseman his errand, and how that he was on the lookout for a good masther workman to teach him a trade. The horseman then said if he liked, he would teach him to be a robber, and finish him so that he would be as perfect as man could be. The prince agreed that it might be as good as any other to learn, so he bound himself there and then to the masther thief for seven years, and went off with him.

Only two of the brothers slept by the roadside that night, and the next day at noon the second brother fell in with another man, who turned out to be a masther marksman, and who, when he heard the prince's errand, offered to teach him to be the best marksman with the bow and arrow that the county could produce. He agreed that maybe this was as good a trade as he could learn, and so he bound himself over to the masther marksman for seven years to learn the trade.

Well, that night only the youngest prince slept by the roadside, for he had

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

n't yet met with a masther to his plaise-ment. But on the third day, just about the middle of the day, he, too, fell in with a man who begun making inquiry of him where he was going, or what was his errand; and when he found it, he said he was the best joiner in that country, and offered to make as good a one of him. So he agreed that a joiner might be as good a trade as he could learn, and he accordingly bound himself over to the masther joiner for seven years also.

Well, that fared well; the three of them were now settled in trades, and well they did at them; and, to make a long story short, as they say, they worked hard and industriously at them for the seven years; and when the seven years was up, just at twelve o'clock the eldest brother arrived at the crossroads where he parted his brothers seven years before, and sat down on his bundle to rest himself and wait for the other two. He was n't long sitting when along the second road comes the second brother, and in very little time aither the youngest *comes along* the third road. Right glad

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they were to see each other, afther being so long parted, and off they set for home, everyone telling his own story of what he had larnt and all happened to him since, they parted. When they arrived home and were welcomed by the king and queen, seeing it was so late and that they were tired and fatigued afther their long journey, the king agreed to put off till the next day the trial of their aptness in their trades. Next morning, then, there was a great gathering entirely of the king's men, and all the nobility and all the country around about, to see the three princes put to the test, and see which of them would win their father's kingdom.

First, the king called forth the eldest of the three brothers, and, "Well, my son," he says, "what trade are you masther of?" "I," says the eldest son, "apprenticed myself to a robber, and am now a masther thief." "Very good," says the king, "I 'll give you a test, and I hope you 'll show yourself desarkin' of the title. Do you see that magpie's nest in yon tree," says the king, "with the magpie sittin' on the

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eggs?" "I do," says the prince. "Very good," says the king; "there 's four eggs in that nest, and I want you to bring them to me without delay, without the magpie knowing that they are gone, and without ever disturbing her. And if you fail you 'll lose your life."

No sooner said than done; the prince walks to the tree, and, climbing it hand over hand till he came right in under the nest, he makes a small hole in the bottom of the nest with his finger, and lets the four eggs fall into his hand. He then slips down, and, walking to the king, hands him the eggs. "Very well done indeed," says the king; "you 're masther of your trade right enough; and it 'll surprise me very much if either of your brothers beats you.

"Now, my son," says the king to his second son, "what trade have you larnt, or are you masther of?" "I," says the second son, says he, steppin' forward with his bow and arrow slung at his back, "I am a masther marksman." "A very excellent trade," says the king, "and I hope

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you 'll show yourself worthy." Taking up one of the magpie's eggs, the king called forth one of his soldiers and set it on his head. "Now," says the king, "you 're to measure off three hundred yards, and from that distance break the egg without turning a hair on this man's head. If you fail, you must give up your life." The prince said nothing at all, but steppin' off three hundred yards, he faced round, and, drawing his bow, sent the arrow clean through the egg on the man's head, just as easily as he might strike a house with it.

"Very good indeed," says the king; "you 're equally as good as your elder brother, and your elder brother is equally as good as you, and if your young brother does n't now beat the both of you—which seems to be very far from likely—I don't know what I 'll do, or how I 'll decide between yous.

"Well, my son," says the king to the youngest prince, "and what trade might you be masther of?" "I," says the youngest, steppin' forward, "I am a mas-

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ther joiner." "A very good trade," says the king, "and I hope you 'll show you have a right to be called masther of it. Do you," says he to the prince, "take up the pieces of that egg your brother broke with his arrow and put them together again, without leaving any sign of where they are joined; otherwise you 'll lose your head." The young prince gathered together the pieces of the broken egg without more ado, and in a short time he had them together into a whole shell again; then, mixing them up with the other three eggs, he asked the king to pick out the one he joined; but though the king looked them round and round, and over and over, he could n't tell one from the other, or see any difference in them.

"Well," says the king, says he, "that beats all. The like of such cleverness I never saw before, and it would take as clever a man as yourselves now to tell which of yous is entitled to the kingdom, for I can't do it. So I think," said he, "I 'll have to ordher yous off for seven years *more to improve yourselves further*, and

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see if at the end of that time any of yous has gained anything on the other."

They thought this, you may be sure, hard enough, but they had nothing for it but to start off the very next morning again, with their little bundles under their arms, blaming their father all they could for being so hard on them as to send them off for another seven years. And they did n't part company at the crossroads this time, but travelled on together for company sake for three days and three nights, and at the end of that time they came to a great castle where there was an odious big crowd gathered, an' on axin' the meanin' of it, they found that it was a fiery dragon who had come to carry away with him the king's daughter, a great beauty entirely; but if the lady could get any warrior bold enough to fight the dragon, the dragon was to fight with him, and give her a chance for her life. But none could be got to fight the fiery dragon; so, after waiting a fair time, the dragon caught up the lovely princess and flew away. He was just after goin' away with her when



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the three princes, or masther tradesmen, arrived, and they found the king in wonderful great grief entirely, moanin' and lamentin' an' takin' no comfort.

The eldest of the three princes then went up to the king, and proposed to go afther the dragon and steal the young princess back from him. The king said if he 'd do this he 'd get the beautiful princess in marriage, and, moreover than that, he 'd give him a whole kingdom with her, for a fortune. The prince said that was not a bad offer at all, and, taking his two brothers with him, he started off, and came up with the dragon where he was asleep in a wood, with the young princess under his head for a pillow, and so that she could n't escape. The masther thief then made his two brothers pull a bag of long grass, and, quietly slipping out the princess from under the dragon's head, he slipped the bag of grass in, in its place, and off for the king's castle they started with her.

But they were n't long gone when the fiery dragon woke up, and found the princess had been stolen from him, and, with

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a wild roar the three brothers heard twenty miles away, he flew up into the air and away in pursuit. They were at this time crossin' an arm of the sea in a boat, with the princess in the bow, and they making all the speed they could for her father's castle, when, lo and behold ye! up in the air, right above them, they sees the dragon just preparing to come down atop of them.

"What will we do?" says the one, and

"What will we do?" says the other. "I

'll tell ye what ye 'll do," says the prin-

cess; "if any of you is a very good marks-

man entirely, he 'll see a little red point

underneath the Dragon's left wing as he is

coming down on us, and if he can hit him

on that spot he 'll kill him. Otherwise,"

says she, "we may all give ourselves up

for lost, for he 'll devour us one and all, as

sure as the sea's salt."

"Well," says the second brother, "I put

up to be a mather marksman, and I 'll

try if I am worthy of my trade."

By this time the dragon was coming

sweeping down atop of the boat, and the

prince, taking up his bow and arrow, aims

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at him, and strikes him right fair on the red point underneath his wing, and killed him dead on the spot; and the dragon came tumbling down head foremost right plump into the boat, and broke the boat into two halves, out in the middle of the sea.

"Now," says the two elder brothers, calling on the younger, "if you 're a mas-ther joiner, let us see what you can do to save our lives." But he very soon showed that he was masther of his trade, and in a short time had the boat put together and as right as ever again.

Then they sailed on to land, and from there with all possible speed travelled as fast as fast horses could fetch them for the king's castle, the princess's father. And when they arrived there, the king was beside himself with joy at the rescue of his daughter, and the whole court was beside themselves with joy, and the whole country gathered in to join in the rejoicements; and the eldest brother got the hand of the lovely princess, and a kingdom for a fortune.

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And for the good work of the other two brothers the princess's father got them married on to two other kings' daughters, and they, too, got kingdoms for fortunes; and so there was no cause for dispute any more atween them, and they sent word to their father how they had fared—small thanks to him—and that he might now sow kail-seed in his kingdom and stock it with canary-birds, for they did n't want it, nor would n't have it, and that they were as happy as the day was long, themselves and their lovely brides, and as rich as that they could never get to the other end of their wealth—and we hope they kept so all the days of their lives ever after.



**CONDY SHEERAN'S  
COURTIN'**



## CONDY SHEERAN'S COURTIN'.

CONDY was a plodding, practical man. And Condy was a bachelor. Off and on for twenty years before, neighbours who had an interest in him—and neighbours who had an interest in their own daughters—had been advising Condy to take a wife unto him. “*Musha*, Condy Sheeran, what ’s goin’ to happen to ye, at all, at all—livin’ there in that wee cabin yer *lee-alone*, with divil a sowl to look afther ye, or care for ye? Why but ye rouse yerself up, man alive! an’ look out for a sthrappin’ young woman that ’ll put yer house to rights—an’ yerself too; an’ make a new man o’ ye. There ye ’re doiterin’ an’ doiterin’, in of the house, an’ out of the house, an’ about the house, an’ delvin’ an’ diggin’ early an’ late, summer an’ winther, on yer wee farm, an’ where yer comfort comes in is more nor I know. Yer house is in an uproar [disordered state] lek the



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fair of Carmen; an' wan would think the clothes on yer back was thrown at ye. Ye 're scratchin' an' scrapin', layin' by money for the sorra-only-knows-who to scatther. Rouse yerself, man alive! There 's girls on all sides of ye that the cheeks of them would be betther nor a fire in yer kitchen, an' they 'd jump at the offer of bein' Miss Sheeran, if ye only sent them the word be a fiddler."

Condy, inwardly amused, ever patiently listened to the kind advice his good neighbours were so generous in bestowing on him. But his poor mother (God be merciful to her!) ere she died left Condy a legacy of proverbs that for years had given him pause. "Never you buy a pig in a poke, Condy *a thaisge*," his mother used to say, far from intending any disrespect to the young ladies of Dhrimholme; "an' there 's many a dashin' girl makes a poor dhraggle-tailed woman." "Betther alone than in bad company, Condy," she would also say. And—a variation of this last—"A lonely hearth an' paice is betther nor the best woman in the wurrl' an' verrins" (variance).

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Still, the more experience Condy had of the lonely hearth and peace, the more frequently would the question force itself on him: "But if I had a middlin' good woman an' no verrins?" And as he and the cat sat by the hearth on a long winter's night, looking into each other's eyes, Condy, with the limited amount of imagination at his command, used often to picture a homely, sensible woman crooning a song round the house as she busied herself doing the *timirishes* (little necessary household matters), while he, with well-washed and well-patched clothes, lay back in his chair in the corner, and, watching her, puffed his little black pipe in cheerful contentment. And at length, when, after mature deliberation, he considered he had reached years of discretion—he was then forty-five, having been born June was three years after *the dear summer*—he decided he might venture to trust his judgment in selecting one fitted to be a wife to his mother's son.

So, on a night when he had a fine junt of fir blazing in the fire, and the cat blink-

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ing and purring at him across the hearth, and his black pipe working spasmodically and not uncomplainingly, Condry went painstakingly through the catalogue of eligible females in the parish. He first weeded out those that were too young: "A slip of a girl undher thirty does n't know her own mind," he said; "so I 'll have nothin' to say to wan o' them." Then he rejected the crotchety, cranky ones, and all who were reputed possessors of any sort of ill-temper, and next the slatternly ones. "Me sawnies," Condry said to himself, "the list 's gettin' mortal small"; and so it was. And when, finally, he had also put aside all who were "too fond o' the sight of the black pandy [porringer] on the coals"—which was to say all who were too fond of tea—just one woman remained. She was Ellen McGroarty, of Throwerstown. Ellen was a daughter of Long Neil, and she had been the heiress of the McGroarty property, consisting of two acres of clayland and two miles of bog and heather—an extensive if not very remunerative estate; besides pigs,

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cows, ducks, drakes, and other farm stock. Regarding Ellen's age, it need only be said that she, like Condy, had reached years of discretion.

Having settled one difficulty, another loomed upon Condy's horizon, and required another night's grave deliberation—How was he to ask the wife?

"Of course"—and Condy seemed to direct his discourse to the cat—"I 'm not used to this sort of business, niver bein' in the habit of axin' weemen." (Condy did n't intend to be satirical at the cost of the young men of Dhrimholme, but unconsciously he was.) "An' I wish I had it well over me."

The etiquette of marriage proposals as observed in Dhrimholme was a mystery to Condy, who had never gone on such an expedition. If there had been an intended father-in-law in the case Condy would have seen his way pretty clearly—even a mother-in-law might have been negotiated. But Ellen was, again like himself, *lee-alone*. Of course, Condy had heard over and over again the ridiculous way they settle ~~those~~

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matters in the tale-books—two blessed idiots squeezing the breath out of one another, one gasping, "Say, beloved star of my existence, will you be mine for ever?" and the other fool replying, "Ye-ye-yes—yes, for ever and ever!" But he did n't give this silly method a moment's thought. He also saw that he might lift the latch and walk in to Ellen with "God save all here; an' I want to know will ye *take* me, Ellen?" But little thought he gave that method. *How* he should do it was more than he knew; and he had half-begun to consider whether, after all, the advantages of having the best girl in the parish, with two acres of clayland and two miles of moorland, geese, pigs, and other farm stock to boot, would really outweigh the mental endeavour the asking of a wife would entail.

One thing, however, Condry did know; and that was, when anyone went looking for a wife, a bottle of whiskey was an indispensable factor. So, with a prayer in his heart and a bottle of whiskey in his pocket, Condry, on a beautiful moonlight night,

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stepped over the moor to Ellen's. Ellen was carding wool in preparation for spinning as Condy, lifting the latch, thrust his head in at the door.

"God save ye, an' God bless the work!" he said.

"Save yerself kindly, an' thanky, Masther Sheeran," Ellen, a little surprised, said. She laid down the cards, and drawing forward a chair, wiped it with her apron and set it in front of the fire. "Come forrid, Misther Sheeran, an' take a glint o' the fire. *Illiga*, a thin, sharp night it is. My fire might be better, too, but, *musha*, it was a poor saison for thurf."

"Oh, thanky, thanky, Ellen," Condy said, settling for himself a seat right at the door, as if he anticipated having to make a clean run for it and chose the readiest position. "I 'll just do here."

"Arrah, bother! come up with yerself when I tell ye. *Musha*, but ye 're warm on it. It would be enough a day the crows would be puttin' out their tongues to go an' to sit by that doore—it 's about as

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shelthery as an iron gate. Come up with yerself when I tell ye!"

And as Condyl took the proffered seat, Ellen's keen eye detected the neck of the bottle sticking out of Condyl's pocket, and instantly a little light dawned on her.

So, as soon as she had put more turf and fir on the fire, and tidied up the hearth, she seated herself, and began the carding again very industriously, all the time running over the litany of woes attendant upon looking after a farm and farm-labourers, and cattle, and ducks, and hens, and pigs—to all which Condyl listened very attentively, and spoke not.

When Ellen had exhausted the topic, having advertised her dowry to her content, she made a politic pause. But Condyl remained silent likewise. She ventured after a minute or two to steal a glance at him. He was putting his hand irresolutely into the pocket whence the bottle showed, and nervously drawing it back again. Ellen coughed; which startled Condyl.

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"Have ye—have ye—a—a egg-cup in the house?" he jerked out.

"A egg - cup? Yis, surely, Misther Sheeran" — with well-assumed surprise, and implying a politeness that forbade her to question her guest. "Surely, Misther Sheeran, I 've a egg-cup," she repeated as she fished for one behind the plates on the dresser.

"I 've—I 've a small dhrop of nice whiskey here," Condy said, drawing forth the bottle, "an' I thought ye might n't object to helpin' me with just a thimbleful."

"Well, thanky, an' long life to ye, Misther Sheeran; I can't have the bad manners to refuse ye—but let it be only a thimbleful. Och, that 'll do, Misther Sheeran! Aisy, aisy! Faith, I'm afeared it 's the tailyer's thimble—ha! ha!—that ye measure with. No, no! taste it yerself first. Och, the sorra a dhrap of it crosses me lips the night till ye dhrink the *crivan* [overflow] off it yerself. No, no, no; it 's no use—I 'll not br'ak me word. Taste it yerself first, Misther Sheeran, an' laive me the dawniest little dhrop in the bottom."



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Condor was sitting half-turned from the fire holding the flowing egg-cup towards her, and Ellen stood facing him in a protesting attitude.

"I tell ye there 's nothin' in it," he said. "It would n't dhrownd a bum-cloak. *Musha*, woman, but ye 're conthrairy! Take it, I tell ye, an' throw it over; all 's in it would n't br'ak a pledge."

"An' I tell ye I won't, till ye dhrink at laist the two parts out of it. I 'd be dhrunk if I took it, Condor Sheeran."

"Dhrunk, *moryah*! There is n't as much in it as would wet yer thrapple. Well, here goes," he said, giving up the argument in despair—"here goes, an' God bless us!"

"Amain!" Ellen fervently responded, "an' God bless us again."

"Ah, ye have n't taken as much out of it," Ellen said as she took the egg-cup from Condor, who, with the sleeves of his coat was wiping his mouth and smacking his lips with satisfaction—"ye have n't taken as much out of it as I 'd lift with three pins. Anyhow"—here she made a wry

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face at it—"here 's luck an' prosperity to ye, Misther Sheeran, an' again God bless us."

"Luck where it goes! Amain! an' thanky kindly," Condy said.

Ellen just tasted it, made another wry face; tasted it again, and coughed distressfully; finally gulped a sup of it, and, with a suggestion of agony expressed in the lines of her face, laid the egg-cup on the table.

"Take it all, I tell ye! Finish it."

"I can't, I tell ye! Agh, agh!"

"I tell ye, ye must finish it."

"An' I—agh, agh!—tell ye I won't. Now take a sup yourself."

"Och, niver a dhrop till you throw off that eyeful there in the cup."

"Ye 're aggeravatin'! I tell ye I can't. Show me that bottle." And taking bottle and egg-cup in her hands, she poured out for Condy a cupful with a *crivan* truly on it. "Now, dhrink that over."

"Well, it 's you that 's aggeravatin' now, woman," Condy said as he carefully caught from her hand the overflowing cup.

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"Is it to dhrink that?" and he took the measure of it with a side squint.

"Ay, that—an' another if you say much. Toss it over, an' be quick about it."

"Och, then, aisy with ye, an' give me time—here 's ' May the divil niver see wan of us! ' "

"Amain! amain!"

In a twinkling the egg-cup was empty.

Condy coughed as he handed it back to Ellen; and corking the bottle, he, according to custom, placed it on the dresser, thus resigning his ownership in the remainder.

Ellen again resumed her work, and Condy turned and gazed intently in the fire. She knew she had rid him of much of the distressing nervousness which troubled him before, and was now content to await developments.

"*Musha!* it 's a cowl' night, Ellen," Condy said, as he spread his hands towards the blaze and shrugged his shoulders.

"Cowl' indeed," Ellen said.

"But a snug, warm little house ye have," carrying his eye round it.

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"Yis, thanks be to God, warm enough, an' snug enough; but—but——"

"But what?"

"Och, just"—with a thoughtful sigh—"I manes to say it 's a bit—don't ye know?—lonesome."

Condy was at once convinced he was dealing with a woman who knew her business.

"Lonesome?" said he. "Throth, I don't doubt ye. I have the same feel meself."

"Now, see that!" Ellen said, looking up at him with sympathy. "I 'm jist sure ye feel lonesome in that barrack of a house, all to yerself."

"Divilish much so."

For a minute or two both remained in thought.

"I often think to meself," Ellen then said, "that it is n't right to be alone."

"Many 's the time Sam Duncan, the great scripturian, tells me the same words out of the Bible."

"An' the Bible 's right. For a man in purtikler, I don't know how he can live

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alone an' keep his temper, for all about him 's going wrong."

"You 're right there. But no more can a woman, especially if she has a farm an' stock to look afther; it 's enough to br'ak any woman's heart."

"Do ye know, Misther Sheeran, ye have the makin's of a snug, warm little place of it there. An' it was only the other night—whetsomiver put ye intill me head—I was jist thinkin' of ye—thinkin' how comfortable an' happy ye 'd be if ye had some sort of a woman body to look afther ye."

"It 's often," Condry said, slowly shaking his head at the fire—"it 's often I 've thought the identical same thought myself."

"Somewan of womankind," Ellen went on—"an aunt or frien' who 'd take a kindly intherest in ye, an' tidy up yer house an' yerself"—here Ellen glanced at Condry's dilapidated garments: Condry also glanced down at them and sighed—"an' make things look like a home it would be a pleasure to come intill."

"Right ye are, in throth"; and Condry

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shook his head emphatically at the fire-blaze.

"We 'll say it 's a day coming on the winther, now," Ellen in poetising strain went on, "an' ye have been out the leelong day up to the knees in mud an' slush on the pratie-ridge an' in the pratie-sheugh, an' ye 're comin' in dhirty, an' cowl', an' miserable, an' benumbed, an' the heat burstin' from the door, as ye open it, cheers the bones o' ye. There 's a roarin' fire leapin' on the h'arth, an' over it hangs a pot of spuds laughin' through their jackets at ye as ye come in. An' the h'arth 's nate an' tidy, an' the house shinin' like a new pin; an' there 's a clane-wiped chair in the corner, an' yer pipe an' tibbacky in the h'arth-bole right beside. An' the cat curled up wan side the fire, an' the dog in the other, an' a woman—yer aunt or cousin—slitherin' roun' the house, doin' this turn an' that wan an' the other, an' fillin' the wee kettle to have it boiled an' singin' on the fire, callin' on the grain o' tay for it to wet as soon as ye 've filled the *farlands* with nice mealy spuds. Condy

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Sheeran, I say again"—with the tone of one anticipating, but defying, contradiction—"I say again, it would be a comfort an' a delight to ye to have some clane, smart, and indushtrious woman - body about the house that would have yer happiness at heart; an' I say it would cheer the heart in ye many a day ye otherwise bring a cowl' heart intill a cowl' an' miserable kitchen."

Every point and every shade of the picture Ellen called up Condry saw vividly in the blaze; and for a minute, with the delights of it, he was too overcome to express himself.

"Thru—thru—thru," he at length said slowly and convincingly; "it 's every word thru as gospel, Ellen McGroarty."

"A cousin, or an aunt, or a frien', then, ye should have," Ellen said as she teased the wool with vigour.

"But that 's just what I can't have. Barrin' me Aunt Mary that 's married on Seumain Throwers of the Long Alt—and *she* can't come—I have n't a frien' in the wurrl. barrin' in Amiriky again; an' them

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that goes till Amiriky," Condý went on thoughtfully, "'ill not in a hurry come back till Irelan' an' hardships for nothin' betther nor to keep house for a poor, good-for-nothin' divil of a lonesome bachelor lake me."

Ellen, politically ignoring his plea of no friends, went on: "There 's fifty things about a house a man can't do an' won't do."

"Can't do and won't do—exactly."

"An' the house, sooner or later, goes to rack an' ruin; and he may then thank God if he does n't go to rack himself."

"Thank God he may; it, 's gospel thruth, Ellen McGroarty. But, as I sayed, I have neither aunt nor frien' of womankin'."

Ellen affected not to perceive the bait, and went off on a new tack, where it would be Condý's duty now to follow. "For a woman's part, now, it is a different matter," she said. "There 's meself, now, an' I 'm livin' alone goin' on four years (it 'll be four years *again*' Oul' New Year's Eve, the 11th January, since me poor



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father—rest his soul!—died)—goin' on four years, an' I find I can manage bravely."

Condy gulped. In a minute, with an almost pitiful appeal in his tones, he said: "Ah, but, now, it 's not the thing for a woman either, no more nor a man."

"Well, no, no, I suppose it 's not altogether the thing," she said, conceding a strong point.

"No; it 's no more right for a woman to be alone than for a man," Condy said, feeling ground again.

"Well, I suppose, Misther Sheeran, when wan looks at it in *that* light"—*what* light Ellen meant was n't exactly clear, for Condy did not seem to throw any dazzlingly new light on the subject by the particular brilliancy of his argument—"when wan looks on it in *that* light, sartintly I suppose it is n't."

"Sartintly it is n't," Condy said with confidence; "it 's mortal lonesome."

"Ay, lonesome it is"; and Ellen shook her head at the wool she carded.

"An' there 's fifty things about a farm a

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woman can't do an' won't do," Condý said, with ill-suppressed triumph, turning her own argument upon her.

"Well, yes," as one who was forced to acknowledge defeat.

"An' a man 's a mighty handy article to have knockin' aroun' a house," said Condý.

"Yis, a man is; I give in to that."

"Ye don't know when, or for what, ye need him."

"Thru'e for ye enough, Misther Sheeran."

"An' a woman's farm an' stock is n't cared for, or fed, or half looked afther—can't be—where there is n't a runt of a man."

"Indeed, an' there 's no lie in that," Ellen acknowledged, with the tone of one on whom light was dawning.

"Then, Misther Sheeran," she resumed, laughingly looking up at him, "I suppose we 'll have to give in wan of us is as bad off as the other?"

"That 's just it," Condý said. "But"—after a slight pause—"it need n't be so."

"Well," Ellen said with clever stupidity,

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"I have sartintly been thinkin' of hiring a thorough good man—thinkin' of it for months back. A hired man is just the very thing I need."

"A hired man," Condry said, slightly losing heart again, "is n't, afther all, the thing."

"Well, sartintly, Mither Sheeran, when wan looks on it in *that* light"—for the mysterious light once more opportunely manifested itself to Ellen—"a hired man is n't the thing either. Still, I 'm thinking, Mither Sheeran, I 'd recommend you sthrongly to hire some good, steady, mid-dlin' oul' woman; that 's what you want when ye have n't any frien' of yer own to keep house for ye."

"No, I 'll not hire a woman. The fact is"—and he looked steadily at Ellen, who had her head bent unnecessarily low over her work—"I am in notions of marryin', if I could soot meself in a good woman, an' that she was willin'."

"Oh now! Faith, an', Mither Sheeran, I think ye could soot yerself aisily in the parish. There 's many a fine bouncin'

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girl would be happy to become Missis Sheeran if they only got the chance."

"I want no bouncin' girls; I want a steady, respectable, sensible, daicent young woman, an' I 'll have no other."

"Well, I can't say but you 're right enough there—if there 's such to be foun' in the parish."

"There is such, then."

"Oh! Then, I 'm sure, if ye find such a young woman, an' that she has sense, she 'll think twicet, Misther Sheeran, afore she gives ye 'No.'"

"Thanky—thanky! An' I think, if I 'm not takin' a liberty, that what *you* want is to marry a steady, sensible man, that 'll take care of ye, an' of yer little farm an' belongin's."

"Ha! ha! ha!" Ellen said, tossing her head and blushing. "If ye say it in fun atself, Misther Sheeran, the same idea run in an' out o' me own head more nor wanst lately. But, Misther Sheeran"—here Ellen bent her head over the work again—"sensible, good men 's scarce an' hard to be got these times."

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"An' Ellen, *a chara*, do ye think there's none such in the parish?"

"Och, indeed, there might be plenty; but *I* know very few such—barrin' yerself, Misther Sheeran."

And a fortnight later Ellen was the wife of the one sensible man whom she knew in the parish.

**BILLY LAPPIN'S SEARCH  
FOR A FORTUNE**



## BILLY LAPPIN'S SEARCH FOR A FORTUNE.<sup>1</sup>

BILLY he lived on dher the same roof with Shamus' a-Ruadh (or Red Shamus), as we called him. Billy had his thrade, an' what ground the four walls stood on. Shamus, poor man, had niver a thrade at all,—if we bar Adam's thrade, delvin' an' diggin',—but had a wee patch of three acres. Billy was a shoemaker, an' a first-class han', too, an' could make piles o' money if he only knew how to keep it; but

<sup>1</sup> A lifrechaun, or leprechaun, is the fairy shoemaker. If the reader wants to acquire untold wealth he has only to catch a lifrechaun, then, having the presence of mind not to remove his eye from him for a fraction of an instant (thereby rendering the little fellow powerless of melting into thin air), he must at once command him to disclose where a crock of gold is hid. The little scoundrel will first endeavour to trick you into lifting your eye off him, and, falling in this, will try fifty little dodges; but, finding all useless, will discover to you what you want, on condition of being set free. The rest is easy.

<sup>2</sup> Properly spelled *Seumas*.



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that was what Billy, poor man, niver could do, or niver choose to do. It was like puttin' corn into the mill-hopper to put money intill Billy's purse, for there was a hole in the bottom of it, an' it emp'ied as fast. Not to say, aither, that Billy was a dissipated man, or a man of ondifferent *char-acth-er*: be no mains; Billy was only jolly an' jovial. Billy had naither wife, wain,<sup>1</sup> chick, nor chile in the wurrl'—he was his lee-alone, an' it was "no cow, no care" with him. "Sure, I'm both well fed an' well cled," Billy would tell ye, "an' afther that money's only a hindhrance: it would burn a hole in my pocket if I kep' it. I work hard airly an' late, an' it's little enough I'd enjoy meself at a fair or a market, thrate me frien's an' customers, an' make the money spin for it. Phew-w-w!" he would whistle, snappin' his fingers at the same time, "afther what I ait, dhrink, an' wear, an' spen' on me frien's, a big button for all the money in the kingdom of Irelan'!"

That was the description of Billy Lap-

<sup>1</sup> Child.

## Billy Lappin's Search for a Fortune.

pin for long enough, as busy as a bumbee, an' as happy as a beggar, spendin' fast, an' makin' it faster; an' there was no mavish<sup>1</sup> from Carnaween to Californiay whistled an' sung as Billy whistled an' sung over his work, airly in the mornin' an' far in the evenin', an' there was n't (if I say it) a cozier or a heartsomer chimbley-corner to sit in, from end to wynd of Dinnygal.

Shamus a-Ruadh (as we called him), poor man, he lived, as I toul' ye, ondherr the same roof with Billy: but poor Shamus he had a wife an' a congregation of wains on his han's, an' had only a spade an' a stout heart to fight the wurrl' with: an' a wondherful fight, considherin' the odds was again him, he did make. Shamus was the heart an' sowl of an industhrous man, an' he had his three acres in such rotation as a flower-garden, his wee patch a parable to the counthry. He worked with Tom, Dick, an' Harry, Paddy an' Shan, every day he could get employ; an' every wet day, or every day he could n't

<sup>1</sup> Thrush.

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

get work with his naybour, he wrought like a black on his own wee farm, besides werkin' afore hours in the mornin' an' afther-time at night. But he had such a charge on his hands, an' such a small way of supportin' it, that at first people was niver tired, when they had nothin' betther to talk of, pityin' poor Shamus a-Ruadh, an' wondherin' how in the name o' Goodness he 'd manage to keep his head above wather till the childer 'd get up an' be useful to themselves, at all, at all. But lo an' behoul' ye, he astonished the counthry when he bought in Peadhar a-Boyle's lan' for two-an'-twenty poun'—half down, an' the other half to be ped up inside two years—when Peadhar soul' out to go to Canaday. But if that astonished them, maybe it is n't dumfoundhered they wor when not four years afther he bought Din-nis a'-Meehan's Lowlan' fiel's, the bate of the baronry, for twoscore an' three poun's, an' ped for it on the nail! An' two years more was n't over his head when it was given intill him that he had the most head of stock, an' the best quality, too, in the

## Billy Lappin's Search for a Fortune.

parish—an' a warmer house than Shamus's or a more thrivin' man was n't to be met with inside the three parishes. An' people was a'most past wondherin' now.

It was two days afther the big May fair of Ballyshanny, where Shamus had purchased five-an'-twenty poun's' worth of young stock, that there was a big debate, of an' evenin', in Billy Lappin's consarnin' Shamus an' his wondherful rise in the wurrl'. Billy himself was as much moi-dhered' about the how an' the why of it all as the nixt, an' Billy hammered away, an' discoarsed very knowin'ly intirely on luck, for it seemed to be the ginerall vardict all round that it was the luck was with Shamus,—an' them has the luck with them, it 's well known whatsomiver they put their han' to prospers.

"Himph!" says Andy Shuvlin of Tully-alt, who was sittin' listenin' to the debate—"himph!" says he, "blatheration on yer luck! Yez know as much of what ye 're talkin' about as a goat knows about sayin' the baid. Luck, *moryah!* I 'll

<sup>1</sup>Mixed up; puzzled.

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

tell ye the luck Shamus a-Ruadh fell in with—his luck was nothin' more nor less than that he caught a lifrechaun. That 's Shamus's luck, an' it 's small credit till a mouse in a mill to grow fat. I have the story from them knows it. It 's six year ago, last Ware, that Shamus met with his luck, caught it be the scroof o' the neck; an' so signs on it he 's a rich man iver since, but it 's only be degrees he 's lettin' it out. Ay, faith, the luck *is* with Shamus a-Ruadh—a crock full of it, that ye might bury yer arm in up till the elbow; an' he took it out of Barney Melly's forth '—it has a yalla look about it an' a jingle would rise yer heart. Ay, Shamus has got the luck, an' no mistake!"

Faith, it tuk away the breath from Billy. He stopped the peggin', with the hammer raised in his han', an' his mouth open that ye might daub a shoe intill it, while Andy was spaikin' it; an' there was n't a sowl in the house, moreover, but was as much consternated as Billy. An' thrue enough, an' it was the wondher o' the wurrl' none

<sup>1</sup> Fort, or rath.

## Billy Lappin's Search for a Fortune.

of them iver thought of it afore, but there was the whole mysthery about Shamus a-Ruadh's good fortune riddled now. It was the lifrechaun an' the crock o' goold out o' Barney Melly's forth was the whole thing!

Well, a hard bed an' a cowl wan to Andy Shuvlin! He was a vagabone, anyhow, iver an' always delightin' in nothin' more nor in puttin' his naybours asthray, an' then laughin' in his sleeve at them—an iver an' always, too, he could make a story, an' dhress it, while a houn' would be shakin' its lug. A hard bed an' a very cowl wan, I say, to the same Andy! for, from that day an' that minute, Billy Lappin was a changed man. Six words more did n't pass his lips that night; but he hammered away, an' thought away, an' more times let the hammer rest where it fell till he 'd take a good long think till himself. An' the nixt mornin', when aforetimes he 'd 'a' been whistlin' an' singin' at his work, Billy was out may-andherin' about the ditches, thinkin'. He joined Shamus a-Ruadh where he was

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workin' in a tattie-patch, an' the divil a wan o' Shamus but yocked to think there had something odd comed over him, for no matther on what subject he set out to discoorse him, poor Billy in a jiffy would, be hook or be crook, have the discoorse immaidiately round upon lifrechauns, an' fairy forths, an' crocks o' goold. An' when Shamus, too, went intill the house for a bit o' brakwis, there was Billy in at his heels; an' Shamus was n't at his brakwis till Billy was at the lifrechauns again. "Be this an' be that, Una," Shamus says to the wife, when Billy did go, "but there 's a somethin' comed over poor Billy Lappin (God take care of him!), whatsomiver it is." The short an' the long of it was, Billy Lappin, who niver afore set his heart in the money he could get, was now settin' his heart an' sowl in the money he could not get. An' mopin' an' doitherin' about the ditches an' hedges Billy goes that day, an' the nixt, an' the day afther that again. "My goghendies!" Billy 'd say till himself, "is n't it the poor thing for *me* be workin' the very skin off me bones—

## Billy Lappin's Search for a Fortune.

workin' airly an' workin' late—for jist as much money as houl's body an' sowl together, an' to say that there 's crocks full of it hid all roun' me, nearly cryin' out for people to come an' find them! My goghendies, oh! if I could only pick up wan o' them crocks, same as Shamus a-Ruadh done, is n't it Billy Lappin would be the happy an' the contented man all the days of his life afther! Och, och, och! Billy *a mhuirín*, if ye could only get yer fist on such a crock what would n't ye do! There would n't be a livin' sowl within ten miles o' where ye 're standin' that would n't be the betther for yer find—all days o' the year should be fair days for them! It 's then ye could thrate yer frien's as ye 'd wish to thrate them. Och, Billy, Billy, Billy! it 's dead ye might as well 'a' been all yer life, for all the speed ye 've come. Five-an'-forty years o' hard work an' hardships, an' as poor now as ye wor the first day ye dhrew breath! Och, Billy, Billy, Billy, darlin', God pity ye!"

An' there was poor Billy's song night, noon, an' mornin'. There was more work



## The Bewitched Fiddle.

comin' intill him to do than would keep a journeyman along with himself goin', but poor Billy he would n't be aither coaxed or coerced to do a hand's turn. He had lost heart entirely, an' could be got to do nothing at all, at all, barrin' go sthreedlin' afther Shamus a-Ruadh, from wan of his farms to the other, not sayin' much, only lookin' at Shamus with his mouth open as if he was wan o' the seven wondhers of Agypt—an' poor Shamus he did n't know no more nor the man o' the moon what Billy maint at all, at all; only himself an' Una they agreed the poor fella's head was turned, an' they wor as kindly with him, an' spoke till him as coaxin'ly as they could. An' when Billy was tired throttin' after Shamus, he 'd doither over the hill to Barney Melly's forth, an' walk roun' it, an' roun' it, an' then over it; an' then he 'd sit him down right atop of it, with his elbows on his knees an' his chin in his hands, an' think, an' think, an' think, for hours together.

Well an' good, this went on for as good as a week, an' Billy had made himself a *spec-tac-le* for the naybourhood, when, wan

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evenin' he was sittin' on the forth, thinkin', he all of a suddint jumps up, an' starts hot foot across the counthry, an' niver stopped till he was in Tullyalt, with Andy Shuvlin himself, no less. An' Billy starts an' he aises his mind to Andy, him sittin' on the end of a praitie *sheuch* where Andy was weedin'. "An' now," says he, when he had finished the paramble of his woes to Andy—"an' now, Andy," says he, "I don't begridge poor Shamus a-Ruadh his good fortune," says he, "God knows. I don't or would n't begridge it aither to Shamus or Una, or wan a dhrap's blood to them—an' shame be on me if I would! But Andy avic, is n't it a sort of hard," he says, "me that lived ondher the same roof with Shamus all me life—for me be left to end me days as hard as I begun them, when, in wan hour's time, if only God sent the luck my way, I might be as rich as a lan'-lord, an' never move a han' for the remainder of me natural life except to make much of them I wish well to—an', Andy, you know them same would make a purty good-sized fair if they wor gathered together."

## The Bewitched Fiddle.

"Himph!" says Andy, says he, who had stopped his weedin' an' taken a sate on the broo o' the ridge beside him—"himph! Thru enough words for ye, Billy Lappin, an' it 's meself, throth, feels for ye—an' ye know it. That it should put purty hard on ye is only natural; an' purty hard, I 'm sartint sure, it would put on meself ondher the same sarcumstances. Yis, hard, in throth. But Billy, me lad," says Andy, says he, turnin' on him an' not movin' a muscle in his face—"Billy, me lad," says he, "if you want to meet with Shamus a-Ruadh's luck,—an' small blame to ye if ye do, an' pity ye would n't,—why the devil don't ye catch a lifrechaun for yerself?"

An' this put Billy to a dead stan' for two minutes.

"Ay, but, Andy *a thaisge*," says he, "sure that 's where the tide laives me. How am I to get hould o' wan?"

"Phoo!" says Andy, "if that 's all 's botherin' ye, ye can aisy enough get over that," says he.

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"What! Aisy?" says Billy, the eyes startin' in his head.

"As aisy as kiss yer han'," says Andy.  
"Now, Billy Lappin, you just pay attention to the words I 'm goin' to tell ye. You heerd me rehearse in your house not very many nights ago how Shamus a-Ruadh come by his good luck?"

"Yis, yis," says Billy.

"Then, Billy, I repate what I sayed afore, that it 's as aisy as winkin' for you to catch a lifrechaun."

"Andy, ye sowl ye, I 'll make a rich man of ye," says Billy, jumpin' till his feet.  
"How am I to catch him? Hurroo!"

"Sit down, sit down here, Billy, an' be quate, an' let me go on with me story. I 'll not ax ye to make a rich man o' me. The devil all else I 'll ax ye do than, afther ye 've caught the lifrechaun, an' then got the goold, to jus' len' me the price of a small wee donkey till afther I 've thrashed in the harwust, an' for that I 'll be very mightily obliged to you," says Andy.

"The price of a—small—wee—donkey!"

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Andy *a chuisle*, I 'll stock yer farm with ele-phants!"

"Och, throth, an' it 's too kind ye are, an' ever an' always wor, Billy *a ghradh*; but I thank you an' I don't want no ele-phants, only just a nice handy wee bit of a donkey that 'll fetch home the winther's thurf for me, an' do wee odd jobs for meself an' a naybour or two I wish well to—an' I 'll pay ye, as I sayed, when I thrash."

"Pay be hanged, Andy Shuvlin! Is it want to insult me ye do? I 'll buy ye all the asses from Galway to Ginnyland, an' make them a present to ye."

"Oh, no, no, no," says Andy, says he, "I would n't think of it—I could n't think of it; ye 'll have to let me pay ye back the last black ha'penny of it—afther I have thrashed. But, to come to what we 're at, Billy Lappin. I 'll give you all the knowl-edge on the subject I got meself, an' give it to ye as I got it, an' if you folly it to the letter, small chance but ye 're a made man. You can catch a lifrechaun in this way: ye must find a he-goat that belongs to a man who 's naither a bachelor nor married,

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that's naither ould nor young, an' that has naither horns nor no horns, an' that naither feeds on bushes nor grasses; ye 're to get sthrag-legs on that goat when it 's naither night nor day; ye 're to mount him naither in yer own parish nor in any other parish—an' all that done, ye 're to give the goat his head, an' houl' on lake grim daith; let him run till he stops, then look out atween his lugs an' yer lifrechaun 's there forenenst ye, hammerin' away at his thrade—an', Misther Lappin, you 're too knowledgable a man for me have the imperence to tell ye what ye 're to do afther."

Billy, who had n't known for joy whether he was on his head or his heels, got down in the mouth as Andy went on.

"Arrah, but, Andy," says he, "sure, man a-dear, ye might as well talk Spanish to pavin'-stones. It 's onpossible for a mortal man to go through with them diractions."

"On the conthrairy," says Andy, "let me tell ye that Providence is playin' intill yer han's in the most exthr'ornery way ever *I* knew."

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"Make me sensible, Andy," says Billy.

"You know Matthew Mulhern of Sthrabeg?" says Andy.

"I do," says Billy.

"Matthew Mulhern of Sthrabeg," says Andy, says he, "has a goat with only the wan horn—beca'se it smashed the other clane off a twelvemonth ago buttin' the tillygraph pole was put up bye Matthew's, thinkin' it was some new sort of a polis-man. Wan horn is n't *horns*; no more is it *no horns*."

"By Jaimminty, yis," says Billy, clappin' his hands.

"Matthew 's naither a marrid man nor a bachelor, beca'se, as ye know, he 's a widda; he 's naither ould nor young, for he 's middle-aged; he naither feeds on bushes nor grasses, be raison Matthew keeps him on the Black Moor, where there grows divil a blade else but heather."

"Right ye are, Andy, me hearty," says Billy.

"If you mount the goat in the twilight it 'll be naither night nor day. An' ye know as well as I can tell ye, that at the

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wan corner o' Matthew's Black Moor the three parishes joins, an' that 's the spot for you, beca'se it 's naither in yer own parish nor in any other. An' there 's for ye now, Misther Lappin!"

Whew! me brave Billy give three leaps into the air, like a kid on May-day, an' yelled for the very joy, an' then threw his arms round Andy Shuvlin, the rascal, an' hugged an' hugged him till he near a'most squeezed the sowl out of him—an' meself 's thinkin' that same would n't be much sin.

That selfsame evenin' seen me brave Billy powlin' away for Sthrabeg, with his head higher an' carryin' himself airier than he done for a week past. When he reached there he went jookin' an' creepin' roun' be the ditches, for he did n't want no wan—much less Matthew—to see him; an' when the sun popped down behin' Munthermullagh, Billy was sthretched among the heather on the Black Moor, an' the goat tethered not fifty yards from him, munchin' an' crunchin' away at the heather, like as if it was the sweetest lettises he ever tasted.



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Now, more betoken, the same was the fair evenin' of Ballintra, an' there was few people to be met with, for they wor all gone to the fair; an' this suited Billy down to the groun'. But, all the same, he did n't wait long, only let it get a wee thrifle duskish, for he was itchin' to get his fist on the lifrechaun; an' when he thought it was close enough in the middle atween night an' day, an' he could houl' out no longer, Billy starts up an' lifts the tether to lead the goat to the mearin' of the parishes. But, mo bhron! afore Billy knew where he was, he foun' himself goin' head over heels, an' thought there was some sort of a wee earthquake sthruck him behind—for there was n't a bigger an' sthronger nor a boulder he-goat in all the counthry than Matthew Mulhern's Brian Boru, as the boys had christened this wan, beca'se of his fondness for fightin', an' his luck in always gettin' the upper han'. Billy started, now that he did get up, off in the diraction of the spot he wanted to reach, with the goat, as he well expected, keepin' close tack till him, an' givin' him

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an odd lift back an' forrid, if he slacked in his gallop at all: an' as he did raich the spot atween the three parishes, an' thried to dhraw up, Brian Boru hoisted him from behind like a keg of *gun-powdher*, an' over he went with Brian head an' heels over on top of him. In the scrimmage, somehow or other, Billy managed to come out atop, and sthrag-legs he was on Brian Boru's back in the shakin' of an ass's lug.

Now, Billy was but a small moiety of a man, an' Brian Boru could carry two like him, an' jump over his own head with them, if he had only a mind. But the goat had n't the mind—at first, at any rate; for he riz on his hind legs an' then riz on his fore, an' he bucked an' wriggled an' twisted, in hopes of throwin' Billy: but, me sowl, Billy knew it was too much throuble an' vexation he had gettin' where he got, to persuade himself to be taken down off it so soon.

Billy held on to the goat like a miser to his bag, an' Brian Boru might as soon think to rattle down a creelful of stars with his horn as to shake Billy from his sate.

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So, when he thried, an' thried, an thried over again, till he seen thryin' was no use, off he starts at a run, as straight ahead as an arra would fly; an' Billy on his back took a tighter grip, an', "Now," says he—"now, glory be to Goodness! I 'm in for it! If ye can only houl' yer houl't, Billy Lappin, it 's a made man ye are this night." An' if he did n't just altogether cut as good a figure, there was niver yet a jockey rode a race-horse that held to his sate as fast as Billy held his.

It was purty cogglesqme ridin', was the moor, an' every joul't Billy got ye might think it was enough to loosen the teeth in his head; but he bore it lake the warrior he was. For Matthew's broken fiel' the goat first made; there was a sheuch of a sizable width, an' poor Billy thought he 'd meet doom in it; but, tiddyfallal! over it with a skip went Brian Boru. Billy's heart went out of his mouth, an' he did n't catch it again till he was half-ways over the fiel'.

There was a thorn-hedge atween that fiel' an' the nixt, an' sweet sarra to the goat if

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anywhere else would do it to cross but through the hedge. "Ram ye, for an ass of a goat," Billy yells, "have ye no aisier place to cross!" But the words was n't out of his mouth till through went the goat, an' through, somehow or another, went Billy; but he thought there was n't two pieces of him stickin' together, and could n't be sure there was till he groped himself with his han'. He was runnin' the blood like the hill of Aughrim, but Billy's spirit was n't cowed for all that. "The morra mornin'," says he, "an' plaise God, I'll be able to buy stickin'-plaster to sheet Ben-Bulbin." He had an undauntless sowl, had poor Billy. "But what the divil's this he's goin' to do with me now?" says he; an' the next minute he thought the left leg was gone off of him for good an' all against Archie Barron's gate-post. "Phew! who cares for a miserly leg!" says Billy. "A beautiful wan of goold an' mother-of-pearl 'll be more befittin' a man o' my wealth an' station, anyhow, afther this night."

Down through Archie's garden went the



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garden there was a dhry sheuch both wide an' deep, an' well overgrown with both briars an' nettles. The goat he come gallopin' right to the brink of it like a race-horse that did n't mane to be last, an' right there he stuck his four legs and come till a dead halt, while poor Billy, Lord help him, was shot out right over Brian's wan horn, an' crash through briars an' nettles he went, crown first, feelin' for the bottom, an' there he stuck with the soles of his feet just appearin' above the ondherwood like some new kind of a wildflower! Brian Boru, as soon as he got rid of his load, turns, an' helter-skelther off in a new diraction he makes, with the two hives o' bees afther, givin' him all the encouragement they could.

Billy, he might have stuck there till he 'd have grown to the bottom, only Andy Shuvlin, the veg<sup>1</sup> that he was, was n't far away, watchin' the whole coorse of Billy's gymnasticks; an' when he seen Billy stuck safely in the sheuch, he run into Archie Barron's an' toul' Archie he

<sup>1</sup> Vagabond.

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b'lieved Billy Lappin had a wee dhrap o' dhrink aboard an' was intherfairin' with his bees without, an' he thought, if he was n't mistaken, the bees had give him a chase into the sheuch at the bottom of the garden, an' it might be as well for Archie see to him laist harm would come till him on his groun'; an' then Andy left.

Archie, as mad as a score an' a half of hatters, went leapin' down the garden. He got Billy Lappin be the heels an' dhragged him out, with the full intention of givin' him such another dhrubbin' as he had n't got in his born days afore. But behold ye, when Archie got him out, poor Billy had n't a gasp in him, an' without a word or a sign he sthretched himself out as stiff as a corp. Archie raised the whillalew at wanst till a wheen o' the naybours come runnin' to his help, an' they carried Billy home an' poured brandy intill him an' put him till his bed, an' he did n't open an eye till the nixt mornin'; an' for a day an' a night afther it was few was the words Billy spoke; but he was thinkin' *at the rate of a mill.*

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The mornin' of the second day he hilloed on Shamus a-Ruadh, an' Shamus comed in. "Shamus," says Billy, "sit ye down there on the fut o' the bed till I start ye a queskin, an' look me in the eye an' answer me sthr'ight."

Shamus, not knowin' what in the wurrl' Billy would be dhrivin' at now, sat him down on the bottom of the bed, an' Billy he put it sthr'ight till him that he had caught a lifrechaun, an' in that way come intill all his wealth; an' axed Shamus for God's sake to tell him how *he* was to set about catchin' wan for himself. Whèn Shamus heerd this he set up a laugh that made the rafthers dinne, an' he now seen intill all Billy's extr'ornery ways an' talk, for the past while.

"Well, Billy, me son," says Shamus, says he, when he got his tongue with him, "I did catch a lifrechaun, sure enough, an' the how I caught it is no great saicret; yerself or e'er another man in the parish can collar wan for himself in the selfsame way an' with no more throuble than me, —though, in throth, even if it was a saicret,



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it 's yerself, Billy, would be welcome till it an' a *cead míle fáilté*. I caught me lifrechaun, Billy avourneen, be mindin' me farm an' stickin' to me spade, workin' airly an' workin' late, goin' to few fairs an' markets, barrin' them I could n't stay from, an' stoppin' late in none of them; without, I thrust, bein' either niggardly or near-goin', or passin' me naybour when I did meet him from home without axin' him had he a mouth on him, still knowin' the valuey of a penny, an' knowin' that while wan an' wan made two with a careful man, an' two an' two four, wan an' wan with a spendthrift made nothin', an' two an' two a broken head. Doin' an' knowin' all this, an' havin'—thanks be to him!—God's blessin' about me, an' his grace, I do thrust, I caught me lifrechaun, an' the lifrechaun fetched me not money so much as aise an' content an' happiness; beca'se, Billy, happiness an' content an' a feelin' of thankfulness to God is, afther all, the great thing, an' money is useful an' enjoyable only in so far as it helps you to those. So much so, Billy, that if

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ye find happiness an' content with tenpence a day, ye have caught a lifrechaun; while if ye got a poun' a minute, an' did n't get content with it, it was only a devil ye caught in a lifrechaun's shape.

"An' now, Billy, me child, I 'm inclined to think that you had your lifrechaun in your hands, an' let him go whilst ye went huntin' a devil."

Billy Lappin he rowled over in the bed without spaikin' a word to this, good, bad, or ondifferent; an' he lay thinkin' for a day an' a night more.

On the nixt mornin' Shamus a-Ruadh was wakened at the brak o' day be hearin' through the wall Billy peggin' away, an' hammerin', an' he whistlin' an' singin' like a nightingale.

"Thanks be to God!" says Shamus, "me poor Billy has caught his lifrechaun again."

An', thanks be to God, he had! An' it niver parted him no more.

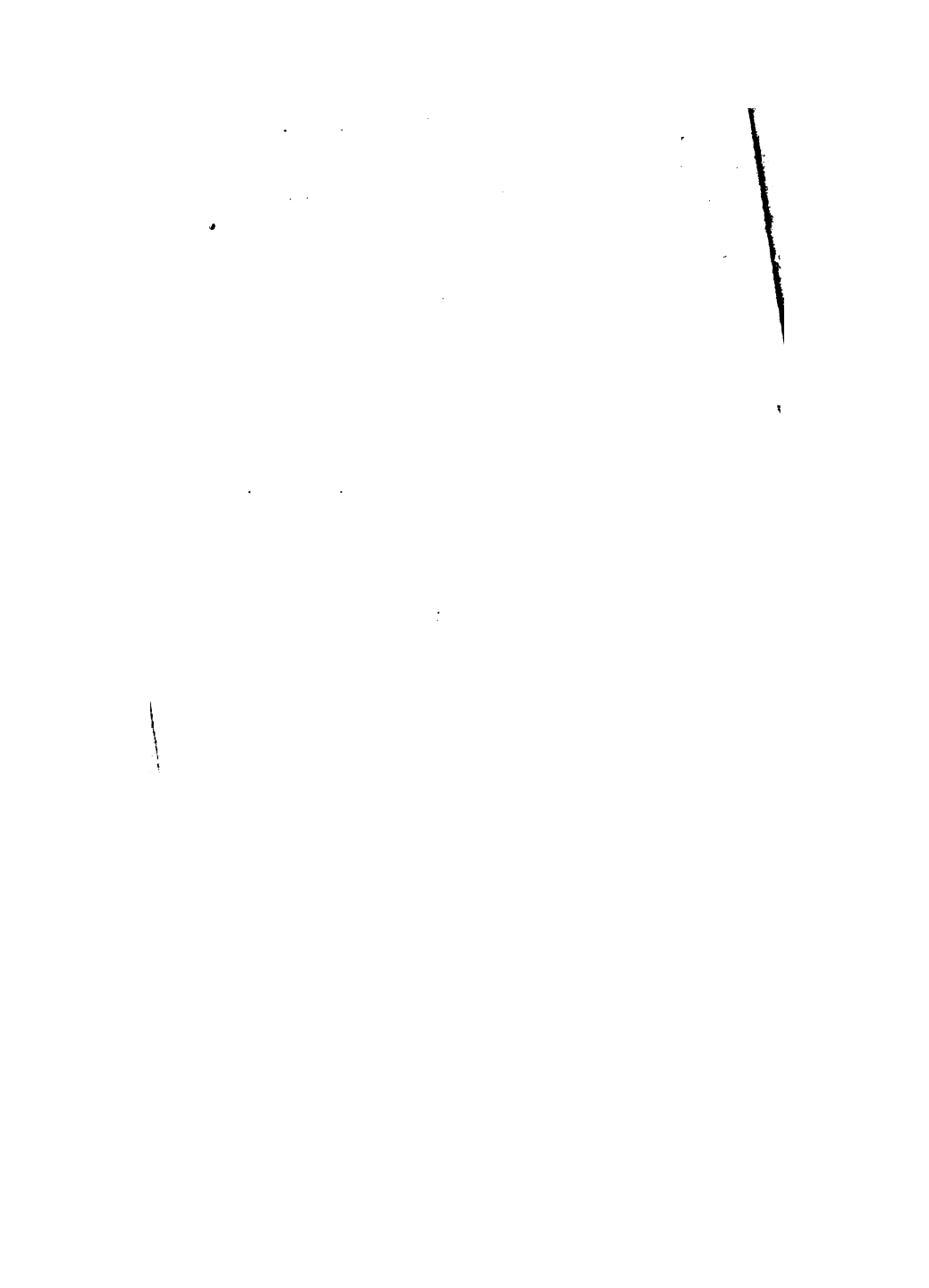
Matthew Mulhern an' Archie Barron, it 's thrue, wanted revenge on Billy bekaas

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of Brian Boru an' the bumbees; but then Billy owed revenge on Andy Shuvlin the scapegrace: so Billy sent word to Matthew an' Archie that it would save time an' throuble, an' wipe out both accounts at the wan reckonin', if, some spare day they 'd have nothin' else to do, they 'd take a dandher over to Tullyalt an' dhrub Andy.

But there was n't four mirrier men in all Ballyshannon the nixt fair day, when the same four gripped hands over half a pint of whiskey, an' dhrunk the health of Brian Boru.





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